

Intermediate 2
Unit 4 Grammar Part A
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Should have

Simple Form: Subject + should + have + Past Participle + ...

Progressive Form: Subject + should + have + been + Verb+ing + ...

Obligations in the Past:

obligation = something that a person has to do as his or her duty

We can use this structure to talk about something that a person was supposed to do, but he didn't or something that a person was supposed not to do but he did.

Examples:

Michael had an accident yesterday.

*He **should have driven** carefully.*

⇒ He was expected to drive carefully, but he didn't.

*He **should have been driving** carefully.*

⇒ He was expected to be driving carefully, but he wasn't.

*He **shouldn't have driven** carelessly.*

⇒ He was expected not to drive carelessly, but he did.

*He **shouldn't have been driving** carelessly.*

⇒ He was expected not to be driving carelessly, but he was.

Regrets:

regret = a feeling of sadness about something sad or wrong or about a mistake that you have made, and a wish that it could have been different and better

We can also use this structure to express our sorrow and regret about something that we were supposed to do and we didn't or something that we were not supposed to do and we did.

You spoke impolitely in the class. Now you are regretful.

*I **should have spoken** politely.*

⇒ I didn't speak politely and now I am sorry about it.

*I **should have been speaking** politely.*

⇒ I wasn't speaking politely and now I am sorry about it.

*I **shouldn't have spoken** impolitely.*

⇒ I spoke impolitely and now I am sorry about it.

I shouldn't have been speaking impolitely.

⇒ I was speaking impolitely and now I am sorry about it.

In other words, we use “should have” in English to talk about past situations that we wish were different, or to give advice or opinions about something that happened in the past. Here are some other examples:

I should have studied harder for the exam. (I regret not studying harder.)

You should have called me yesterday. (I think it was a good idea to call me, but you didn't.)

He should have arrived by now. (I expect that he has arrived, but I'm not sure.)

You can also use “shouldn't have” to talk about something that was a bad idea, or that you regret doing in the past. For example:

I shouldn't have eaten so much cake. (I feel sick because I ate too much cake.)

You shouldn't have lied to me. (I'm angry because you lied to me.)

She shouldn't have left her phone in the car. (It was a mistake to leave her phone in the car.)

Source:

[Intermediate 2 \(anglophone.ir\)](http://anglophone.ir)