

THE USE OF “OJALÁ” IN SPANISH

The expression “**ojalá**” is derived from the Arabic influence on the Spanish language and is used to express hope that something would happen or would have happened. “**Ojalá**” is always followed by a verb tense in the subjunctive mood.

In this summary, we will cover the use of “**ojalá**” in the following tenses:

1. The Present Subjunctive

In the present subjunctive, “**ojalá**” can be translated roughly as “*hopefully*” to express hope for something, that is *possible*, to happen in the *present* or the *future*, for example:

Ojalá que no llueva esta noche.	<i>Hopefully, it won't rain tonight.</i>
Ojalá que venga mi hermano hoy.	<i>Hopefully, my brother will come today.</i>

2. The Imperfect Subjunctive

“**Ojalá**” can also be used along with the imperfect subjunctive to express hope that something, that is *unlikely* or *improbable*, would happen in the *present* or the *future*, for example:

Ojalá que pudiéramos ganar mucho dinero en un año.	<i>I wish we could make a lot of money in one year.</i>
Ojalá que viniera mi hermano hoy, pero siempre está ocupado.	<i>I wish my brother would come today, but he is always busy.</i>

3. The Perfect Subjunctive

The expression “**ojalá**” can also be used with the present perfect to hope that something, that is *possible* to happen, has happened in the *past*, for example:

Ojalá que haya llegado mi amigo a pesar del tráfico.	<i>I hope that my friend has arrived despite the traffic.</i>
Ojalá que ya hayan arreglado la tele.	<i>I hope that they have already fixed the TV.</i>

Although less common, “**ojalá**” can also be used with the present perfect to hope that something, that is *possible* to happen, will have happened at some point in the *future*, for example:

Ojalá que haya llegado mi amigo para la próxima semana.	<i>I hope that my friend will have arrived by next week.</i>
Ojalá que ya hayan arreglado la tele para mañana.	<i>I hope that they will have fixed the TV by tomorrow.</i>

4. The Pluperfect Subjunctive

The expression “**ojalá**” can also be used with the pluperfect subjunctive to wish that something, that is *impossible* to happen, would have happened in the *past*, for example:

Ojalá yo hubiera estudiado medicina.	<i>I wish I had studied medicine.</i>
Ojalá mi abuelo no hubiera muerto .	<i>I wish my grandfather hadn't died.</i>

Summary

We can summarize the use cases of “**ojalá**” in the following table with the verb “**ser**” as an example:

	Present or Future	Past
Possible or Probable	Present Subjunctive e.g., Ojalá (que) sea ...	Perfect Subjunctive e.g., Ojalá (que) haya sido ...
Impossible or Improbable	Imperfect Subjunctive e.g., Ojalá (que) fuera ...	Pluperfect Subjunctive e.g., Ojalá (que) hubiera sido ...