

-아/어 봤던들

had one tried, even then

Supposes an attempt that was never made, and concludes it would have changed nothing. The counterfactual cousin of -(으)ㄴ들.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

하다 verbs	해 봤던들	말하다 → 말해 봤던들
Last vowel ㅣ or ㅓ	-아 봤던들	찾다 → 찾아 봤던들
Any other vowel	-어 봤던들	만들다 → 만들어 봤던들
Without 봤	-았/었던들	알았던들
Second clause	no difference made	달라질 것은 없었다
Regret instead	-았/었더라면	알았더라면 좋았을 텐데

WHEN TO USE IT

The vowel follows the -아요/어요 rule: 해 봤던들, 말해 봤던들, 찾아 봤던들. The ending 던들 may also attach without 봤: 알았던들.

The supposed attempt did not happen, and the second clause says it would have made no difference: 그때 말해 봤던들 달라질 것은 없었다.

That futility is what separates it from -았/었더라면, which regrets a missed chance and implies things would have been better.

The register is markedly archaic. Modern writing uses 더라도 or 아 봤자 to say the same thing.

IN USE

- 1 그때 말해 봤던들 달라질 것은 없었다.
Had I spoken then, nothing would have been different.
- 2 아무리 찾아 봤던들 나올 리가 없었다.
However hard we had searched, it could not have turned up.
- 3 일찍 알았던들 무슨 수가 있었겠는가.
Had we known sooner, what could we have done?
- 4 말려 봤던들 그는 듣지 않았을 것이다.
Even had we tried to stop him, he would not have listened.
- 5 직접 만들어 봤던들 결과는 매한가지였으리라.
Even had we made it ourselves, the result would have been the same.

6 서둘렀던들 이미 늦은 뒤였다.

Even if we had hurried, it was already too late.

COMPARED WITH

-았/었더라면

The pair to keep straight. 더라면 regrets a missed chance and implies things would have gone better; 봤던들 says they would not.

일찍 알았더라면 막을 수 있었을 텐데. (regret) / 일찍 알았던들 소용없었다. (futile anyway)

-(으)ㄴ들

The same 들, pointed at the present. -(으)ㄴ들 supposes something now; 봤던들 supposes something in the past.

후회한들 소용없다. (now) / 말해 봤던들 소용없었다. (then)

-아/어 봤자

The everyday version of the same futility. 봤자 is casual and present-facing; 봤던들 is archaic and looks back.

말해 봤자 소용없어요. (speech) / 말해 봤던들 달라질 것 없었다. (literary)

WATCH OUT

X 일찍 알았던들 막을 수 있었을 것이다.

O 일찍 알았더라면 막을 수 있었을 것이다.

던들 concludes that nothing would have changed. To regret a missed chance, the form is 더라면.

X 지금 말해 봤던들 소용없다.

O 그때 말해 봤던들 소용없었을 것이다.

The construction supposes something in the past. For the present, -(으)ㄴ들 or 봤자 is right.

X 야, 말해 봤던들 소용없어.

O 야, 말해 봤자 소용없어.

봤던들 is archaic. In conversation, -아/어 봤자 carries the same meaning.