

-(으)련만

would that it were, and yet

Wishes for something that is not the case, and knows it. A literary ending that supposes a better outcome only to set it against reality.

HOW TO ATTACH IT

Ends in a vowel	-련만	하다 → 하련만
Ends in a consonant	-으련만	있다 → 있으련만
Ends in ㄹ	-련만	살다 → 살련만
Fuller form	-(으)련마는	있으련마는
Usually preceded by	-(으)면, -았더라면	돈이 있으면 ...
Real event instead	-건만	기다렸건만

WHEN TO USE IT

Vowel stems take -련만, consonant stems -으련만, and a ㄹ stem adds nothing: 살련만. The fuller form is 으련마는.

The first clause states what would be true under some condition; the second reports that it is not: 돈이 있으면 도울 수 있으련만 형편이 그렇지 못하다.

A conditional almost always precedes it — -(으)면 or -았/었더라면. The ending carries the wish; the condition supplies what would have to change.

Against -건만, which laments something that did happen, -(으)련만 laments something that would happen but does not.

IN USE

- 1 형편이 나으면 도울 수 있으련만 그러지 못해 미안하다.
Were I better off I could help, and I am sorry that I cannot.
- 2 비만 오지 않았더라면 좋았으련만.
If only it had not rained.
- 3 조금만 일찍 알았더라면 막을 수 있었으련만.
Had I known a little sooner, I might have prevented it.
- 4 가까이 살면 자주 볼 수 있으련만 거리가 너무 멀다.
If we lived nearer I could visit often, but the distance is too great.
- 5 시간이 있으면 직접 만들련만 요즘은 여유가 없다.
Had I time I would make it myself, but these days there is none.

6 봄이 오면 꽃도 피련만 아직은 겨울이다.

Come spring the flowers would bloom, but it is winter still.

COMPARED WITH

-건만

The pair to keep straight. -건만 laments what actually happened; -(으)련만 laments what would happen but cannot.

기다렸건만 오지 않았다. (I waited, and yet) / 시간이 있으면 가련만. (I would go, if only)

-았/었더라면

They work together. 더라면 supplies the counterfactual condition; -(으)련만 supplies the wish and the disappointment.

일찍 알았더라면 막을 수 있었으련만.

-(으)면 좋겠다

-(으)면 좋겠다 states a wish plainly and hopefully; -(으)련만 states one already known to be out of reach.

시간이 있으면 좋겠어요. (I hope to have time) / 시간이 있으면 가련만. (I would go, but I haven't)

WATCH OUT

X 시간이 있어서 갈 수 있으련만 다행이다.

O 시간이 없어 갈 수 없다. 시간이 있으면 가련만.

The ending exists to mark a wish that reality denies. A satisfied outcome removes its reason for being.

X 어제 기다렸으련만 오지 않았다.

O 어제 기다렸건만 오지 않았다.

Waiting actually happened, so the ending is -건만. -(으)련만 supposes something contrary to fact.

X 야, 시간 있으면 가련만.

O 야, 시간 있으면 갈 텐데.

-(으)련만 is literary. In conversation, -(으)ㄹ 텐데 carries the same regret.