

Answer to Question # 32. Answer 3 is correct.

In Japanese, there are at least two terms that can be used to convey the idea that someone WANTS something: ほしい (hoshii) and たい (tai).

Let's start with ほしい (HOSHII), which is an i adjective that is usually translated as “desire.” This term is used in TWO DISTINCT WAYS: 1) when you desire an OBJECT, the object is usually marked with が (ga) and is followed by ほしい (hoshii). For example, ミルクがほしい (miruku ga hoshii) = “milk is desired” or “I desire milk.” [However, sometimes an object that precedes ほしい (hoshii) can be marked with は (wa) instead, if it functions as a topic.]

2) When you want A PERSON OF EQUAL OR LOWER STATUS TO DO something, ほしい (hoshii) is used after the te or de form of a verb. For example, 塩を取ってほしい (shio wo totte hoshii) = “I desire that you pass the salt. 取って (totte) is the te form of 取る (toru) = “pass” or “take.” [Unless you are talking with very close friends, it's better to soften this sentence and to make it more hesitant. For example, it's better to say 塩を取ってほしいんだけど (shio wo totte hoshiin dakedo) = “I desire the salt, but...”].

Looking at the proposed answers to our question, we can see that neither Answer 1 nor Answer 2 is an appropriate way to use ほしい (hoshii). Answer 1 actually means “I desire that YOU sleep a little more.” In addition, although ことが (koto ga) can be used with verbs to make noun phrases, it is never combined with ほしい (hoshii) as seen in Answer 2.

Therefore, BOTH ANSWER #1 and ANSWER #2 ARE INCORRECT.

Next, let's discuss the term たい (TAI), usually translated as “want to” or “would like to.” たい (tai) is used to form i adjectives from verb stems, meaning their pre-masu forms. For example, to say “I want to go,” start with 行き (iki), the stem of 行きます (ikimasu), and add たい (tai). The result is 行きたい (ikitai). To say “I want to stay,” start with い (i), the stem of います (imasu), and add たい (tai). The result is いたい (itai). [痛い (itai) also means “painful,” but when it carries this meaning, it's spelled using kanji as shown here.]

If a sentence that employs the たい (tai) form involves an object, the object is usually followed by を (wo). For example, 海を見たい (umi wo mitai) = “I want to see the ocean.” Looking at Answer 3, which doesn't involve an object, 寝たい (netai) is derived from the stem form of 寝ます (nemasu) plus たい (tai) and means “I want to sleep.”

Therefore, ANSWER #3 is CORRECT.

Both the ほしい (hoshii) and たい (tai) forms can be followed by です (desu), in polite speech, or they can be used without です (desu), in plain speech.

When you want A PERSON OF EQUAL OR HIGHER STATUS TO DO something, ほしい (hoshii) cannot be used. Instead, you may use 下さい (kudasai). To be even more polite, use the te or de form of a verb followed by the たい (tai) form of a verb of receiving. In other words, use もらいたい (moritai) or いただきたい (itadakitai).

The following three sentences are ALL CORRECT if you are asking a person of equal or higher status to pass the salt: 塩を取って下さい (shio wo totte kudasai) = “please pass the salt.” 塩を取ってもらいたい (shio wo totte moritai) = “pass the salt, and I would like to receive.” 塩を取っていただきたい (shio wo totte itadakitai) = “pass the salt, and I would like to humbly receive.”

Since desire is an internal feeling that cannot be observed by others, both the ほしい (hoshii) and たい (tai) forms are generally used only for talking about your own desires, not those of other people. However, these forms CAN be used when asking other people QUESTIONS. For example, the following two sentences are BOTH CORRECT: 辞書がほしいですか (jisho ga hoshii desu ka) = “do you desire a dictionary?” 海へ行きたいですか (umi e ikitai desu ka) = “do you want to go to the ocean?”

When you want to talk about the desires of a THIRD PERSON, you can combine either the ほしい (hoshii) or the たい (tai) form with がる (GARU), meaning “seems to be.” To do this, remove the final i from either ほしい (hoshii) or たい (tai) and add がる (garu). For example, the following two sentences are BOTH CORRECT: 田中さんは辞書をほしがっています (tanakasan wa jisho wo hoshigatte imasu) = “Tanaka seems to be desiring a dictionary.” 田中さんは海へ行きたがっています (tanakasan wa umi e ikitagatte imasu) = “Tanaka seems to be wanting to go to the ocean.”

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Question 32. “I want.”

You want to say, “I want to sleep a little more.”

Which of the following 3 Japanese sentences is correct?

1. もう少し寝てほしいです (mou sukoshi nete hoshii desu).

2. もう少し寝ることがほしいです (mou sukoshi neru koto ga hoshii desu).
3. もう少し寝たいです (mou sukoshi netai desu).