

Modal Verbs



Remember this:

Modal verbs, also called helping verbs, include *can, could, may, might, will, would, should, must, have to, ought to, needn't...etc.* They are used with other verbs to express **ability, possibility, obligation, lack of necessity**, and so on. The chart below summarizes this:

	Modal verbs	Examples
Ability	can , could	- Maria can speak four languages. - He could sing when he was young.
Possibility	may, might, can, could	- The car looks nice, but it might be expensive. - The Taylors may visit us next week. - My book could be in the office. - Smoking can cause death.
Obligation (necessity)	must have to had to	- Passengers must fasten their seat-belts. - Students have to wear the school uniform. - Last night, it was raining heavily, so I had to drive slowly.
No obligation (lack of necessity)	don't have to needn't	- He doesn't have to work on Saturday mornings. - You needn't wear a suit and a necktie for the interview.
Advice	should ought to had better	- I think you should exercise regularly. - The patient should see a doctor now. - You had better call and check your hotel booking.
Prohibition	mustn't can't	- Teenagers mustn't watch this TV programme. - You can't park here; it's a private property.
Certainty	must	- She's wearing a diamond ring. She must be married.
Permission	may can	- May I borrow your red dress for the party? - Can I use your sunglasses today?

EXERCISE 1 Fill in the chart with the appropriate modals.

may - have to - can - don't have to - could - might - needn't - can't - must - ought to - mustn't - should - had better

Ability	Obligation (necessity)	No obligation (Lack of necessity)	Advice	Prohibition	Possibility
- _____ - _____ - _____	- _____ - _____ - _____	- _____ - _____ - _____	- _____ - _____ - _____	- _____ - _____ - _____	- _____ - _____ - _____

EXERCISE 2 Underline the right modal in the list.

1. It's cloudy; It (might/ should) rain tonight.
2. I (must/ needn't) respect the red light.
3. (May/must) I take your pen?
4. You (should/ mustn't) see a doctor.
5. He (must/ mustn't) smoke in the station.
6. You (must/needn't) come; you could just call.
7. When I was 14, I (can/could) run faster.
8. I (can/ could) play violin and guitar.
9. Tonny (had to/ have to) leave yesterday.
10. He (can't/ couldn't) come last night.
11. It's a hospital. You (must/ mustn't) smoke here.
12. You (should/ should have) helped him when he asked for help yesterday.
13. Mathew has been working all day; he (must/ needn't) be tired.
14. (Can/ May) you drink a bottle of water without stopping?
No, I (mightn't/ can't).
15. He didn't show up yet. He (might/ might have) taken the wrong bus.

QUIZ 11

Quiz on Modal Verbs

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EXERCISE 1 Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word from the list. (7Pts)

- I am good at languages. I _____ speak French, Spanish and English. will - can - must
- _____ I use your calculator machine, please? might - may - should
- _____ you pass some salt, please? should - must - could
- "You _____ smoke in the hospital," he said. wouldn't - mustn't - needn't
- He said it _____ rain tonight. had to - should - might
- You _____ work hard if you want to succeed. must - can - mustn't
- Mr. Laurence _____ come because he was sick. mustn't - couldn't - can
- When I was a child, I _____ wear the school uniform. had to - must - can
- We have a party tonight. So, we _____ be late. mustn't - had to - has to
- The entrance to the stadium is free today. You _____ buy the ticket. mustn't - don't have to
- I saw her crying. She _____ a problem. will have had - must have had - can't have had
- You _____ all this dessert. We still have some apples and oranges in the fridge. shouldn't have brought - will have brought - might have brought
- The man over there _____ Mr. Jason. Mr. Jason died two weeks ago. should be - will be - can't be
- When he was a young boy, he _____ work out every day. can - could - will

EXERCISE 2 Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word from the list. (8Pts)

- "It's a library. You _____ keep quiet," he said. must - can - may
- Everybody can get this job. You _____ get any diploma. needn't - should - will
- "You _____ go if you want to," the boss told his secretary. may - should - must
- If you want to catch the train, you _____ leave now. will - must - can
- There is plenty of food and the guests are few. You _____ buy all this food. don't have to - mustn't - should
- You _____ leave the medicine on the ground. The child might swallow it. should - shouldn't - may not
- Taxi drivers _____ respect the red light. can - must - might
- He has a Ferrari car. He _____ be very rich. must - can - will

EXERCISE 3 Match the following sentences with their right functions. (5Pts)

- He can play the violin pretty well.
- Can we go out tonight, mum?
- You should work out regularly.
- Could you help me do this homework?
- Would you like some chocolate?
- She got a good mark. She must be an excellent student.
- You must respect the traffic code.
- Ask your father. He may know the answer.
- He can't play the match today.
- You mustn't park your car here.

- Advice
- Permission
- Ability
- Request
- Offer
- Obligation
- Certainty
- Possibility
- Prohibition
- Inability

1 : _____ 2 : _____ 3 : _____ 4 : _____ 5 : _____ 6 : _____ 7 : _____ 8 : _____ 9 : _____ 10 : _____