

Modals: Overview

FORM:	Modal + base verb			
	will	must not	shall	can
	would	must	should	could
	have to		ought to	may
	don't / doesn't have to		had better	might

USE: The “**modal verbs**” are auxiliaries. Except for **will**, which indicates futurity, they tell us how the speaker feels about the main verb.

Will

- Indicates the main verb is to occur in the future.
*We **will** meet for lunch next week.*

Would

- Is the past of **will**.
*Jason said he **would** be absent tomorrow.*
- Is used in conditional sentences.
*If I won a lot of money, I **would** travel for a year.*

- Is a polite form for asking questions.
***Would** you please bring me a glass of water?*

- Is used for repeated past actions.
*When I was young, we **would** play hockey on the street.*

Must, have to

- For most English speakers, these two mean the same thing: necessity or obligation.
*You **must** have money to travel.*
*You **have to** go to university to become a doctor.*

Must not, Mustn't

- Indicates something is unacceptable or forbidden, it is more forceful than should and ought to.
*You **musn't** smoke here*

Do not / does not have to

- Indicates that you are not obligated to do something. Use it when someone is not sure what is necessary.
*You **don't have to** wear a tie to teach at this school.*

Should, Ought to, Had better

- Indicates a strong suggestion or preference.
*You **should** study. You have an exam tomorrow.*

<u>Should,</u> <u>Ought to</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicates there is a strong possibility something will happen. <i>The concert <u>should</u> be great tonight.</i>
<u>May, Might,</u> <u>Could</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicates a weak possibility something will happen. <i>It <u>might</u> rain.</i>
<u>May, Can,</u> <u>Could</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicates formal permission. <i><u>May</u> I leave early today?</i>
<u>Can</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicates ability or capacity. <i>Gloria <u>can</u> speak three languages.</i>
<u>Could</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The past of can. <i>When I was in university, I <u>could</u> speak French.</i>• Used in polite questions. <i><u>Could</u> you tell me the time?</i>• Used in conditional sentences. <i>She <u>could</u> be a great singer if she hired a manager.</i>
<u>Shall</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To make a suggestion. <i><u>Shall</u> we dance?</i>• To express the future. <i>I <u>shall</u> never forget you.</i>
<u>Future</u> <u>Possibility</u>	<p>It <u>is going to</u> snow tonight. = 99% It <u>will</u> snow tonight. = 98% It <u>should/ought to</u> snow tonight. = 80% It <u>may/might/could</u> snow tonight. = 50%</p>
<u>Intensity</u>	<p>You <u>must</u> talk to Kim. You'd <u>better</u> talk to Kim. You <u>should</u> talk to Kim. You <u>don't have to</u> talk to Kim. You <u>must not</u> talk to Kim.</p>

Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

1. Since she is my sister, I (could, should) go to her wedding.
2. Tanya said that she (might, should not) call us later.
3. Ten years ago, Steven (should, could) lift a hundred pounds easily.
4. I have a lot of work to do, but I (would, might) go to the party.
5. I really (must, might) exercise more often.
6. (Should, Can) I borrow your pen because I can't find mine?
7. Grandmother, (may, can) I stay up to watch television if I finish my homework?
8. You (should not, ought not to) smoke in this restaurant.
9. The doctor told the patient that he (could, should) go home if his fever went down by Saturday.
10. In a cold climate, you (should, have to) wear a hat and coat outside in January.
11. We (must not, don't have to) go out tonight if you are busy.
12. I think she (can, might) speak English and French.
13. The doctor told my uncle that he (could, must) stop drinking so much.
14. It (may, has to) be a good concert tomorrow night.
15. You (must not, don't have to) use the computer room during class time.
16. (Must, Could) you turn down the stereo a little?
17. When I was younger, I (can, could) party all night long.
18. My car is making funny noises. I (must, should) take it to a mechanic.

Complete the following sentences.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. I would like _____ | 6. Children should _____ |
| 2. They might _____ | 7. It's cloudy, it might _____ |
| 3. When I was a child, I would _____
_____ | 8. I drive a car now, but a few years ago,
_____ |
| 4. If you want to be an engineer, you must _____
_____ | 9. I will _____ this
weekend. |
| 5. When I was younger, I could _____
_____ | 10. Everybody should _____
_____ |

Complete the sentences with DON'T / DOESN'T HAVE TO or MUST NOT.

1. The soup is too hot. You _____ eat it yet. Wait for it to cool.
2. Liz finally got a car, so now she usually drives to work. She _____ take the bus.
3. If you are in a canoe, you _____ stand up and walk around. If you do, the canoe will probably tip over.
4. According to the rules of the game, one player _____ hit or trip another player.
5. The review class before the final exam is optional. We _____ go unless we want to.
6. Most vegetables can be eaten raw. You _____ cook them.
7. You _____ use a pencil to write a cheque because someone could change the amount, date or name and then cash it.
8. When the phone rings, you _____ answer it. It's up to you.
9. When you have a new job, you _____ be late the first day. In fact, it is a good idea to be a few minutes early.
10. You _____ tell Brad about the surprise birthday party.

Change the following sentences using the AUXILIARY VERB which precedes each sentence.

1.	CAN	Jim speaks Spanish very well.
	INT.	
	AFF.	_____
	NEG.	_____

2.	MAY	I help you.
	INT.	
	AFF.	_____
	NEG.	_____

Intermediate 1 – Exercise 25 – Modals: Overview

3.	MUST	The students are leaving now.
	INT.	
	AFF.	
	NEG.	

4.	SHOULD	He meets me in the cafeteria.
	INT.	
	AFF.	
	NEG.	

5.	HAVE TO	Henry opens the window.
	INT.	
	AFF.	
	NEG.	

Complete the dialogues using SHOULD, OUGHT TO, or HAD BETTER.

1. A: Martha has a sore throat. It hurts when she swallows. What should she do?

B:

2. A: Tim has a stiff neck; he can't turn his head. What should he do?

B:

3. A: Ingrid wants to improve her reading ability in English . What should she do?

B:

Intermediate 1 – Exercise 25 – Modals: Overview

4. A: I don't have a winter coat. I don't have a lot of money to spend on clothes. What should I do to stay warm?

B:

5. A: Someone stole my car. What should I do?

B:

6. A: I spilled paint on my new shirt. I'm worried that it won't come out. What should I do?

B:

7. A: Lina's listening comprehension isn't very good. When people speak to her, she doesn't always understand them. She would like to improve. What should she do?

B:

8. A: Sandra bought a new pair of shoes. After she wore them for a week, the sole came unglued. What should she do?

B:

9. A: The window in my office is stuck, the air conditioning and heating systems don't work, and one leg of my desk is shorter than the others. What should I do?

B:

10. A: Tom asked Mary out on a date. She said no. He really likes her. What should he do?

B:
