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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.

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QUIZ 11 Quiz on Modal Verbs

/20

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

1. I am good at languages. I _____ speak French, Spanish and English. will - can – must
2. _____ I use your calculator machine, please? might - may – should
3. _____ you pass some salt, please? should - must – could
4. "You _____ smoke in the hospital," he said. wouldn't - mustn't - needn't
5. He said it _____ rain tonight. had to - should – might
6. You _____ work hard if you want to succeed. must - can - mustn't
7. Mr. Laurence _____ come because he was sick. mustn't - couldn't- can
8. When I was a child, I _____ wear the school uniform. had to - must – can
9. We have a party tonight. So, we _____ be late. mustn't- had to – has to
10. The entrance to the stadium is free today. You _____ buy the ticket. mustn't - don't have to
11. I saw her crying. She _____ a problem. will have had – must have had - can't have had
12. You _____ all this dessert. We still have some apples and oranges in the fridge. shouldn't have brought - will have brought - might have brought
13. The man over there _____ Mr. Jason. Mr. Jason died two weeks ago. should be - will be - can't be
14. 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)

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

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

1. He can play the violin pretty well.	a. Advice
2. Can we go out tonight, mum?	b. Permission
3. You should work out regularly.	c. Ability
4. Could you help me do this homework?	d. Request
5. Would you like some chocolate?	e. Offer
6. She got a good mark. She must be an excellent student.	f. Obligation
7. You must respect the traffic code.	g. Certainty
8. Ask your father. He may know the answer.	h. Possibility
9. He can't play the match today.	i. Prohibition
10. You mustn't park your car here.	j. Inability

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

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