



Modal verbs and modal perfects

What's a modal verb?

- They help express a speaker's attitude or opinion, obligation, permission, possibility,...
- They function as an auxiliary
- They don't use -s for the third person sg

ABILITY AND PERMISSION

- PRESENT TENSE:
 - Ability: CAN
 - Permission: CAN / MAY
- PAST TENSE:
 - Ability: COULD
- OTHER TENSES:
 - Ability: BE ABLE TO
 - Permission: ALLOW TO

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ABILITY AND PERMISSION

She can speak six languages

(ability)

My grandfather could play golf

(ability)

He won't be able to speak Japanese in a week!

(ability)

Can we swim in the lake?

(permission)

Could I leave early today, please?

(permission)

You may not use the car tonight

(permission)

ADVICE

- Should
- Ought to (more formal; not common in questions)

ADVICE

- You should stop smoking
- She shouldn't speak to her father like that
- You ought to be kinder to him
- He ought to be home by 7 o'clock

OBLIGATION

- MORAL OBLIGATION:
 - **have to** (neg. don't have to)
- STRONG OBLIGATION / NECESSITY:
 - **must**
 - *CAREFUL! **Mustn't** is for **prohibition**.
Don't have to means **you don't need to do** something.

OBLIGATION

- Children have to go to school.
- I don't have to get up early at the weekend.
- You must wear a uniform
- You mustn't smoke here

NECESSITY & NO OBLIGATION

- NECESSITY:
 - need to / need
- NO OBLIGATION:
 - needn't / don't need to

NECESSITY & NO OBLIGATION

- Does it need to be so dar in here?
- Need it be so dark in here? (formal)
- You don't need to mention this to your father.
- You needn't mention this to your father.

POSSIBILITY & CERTAINTY

- POSSIBILITY:
 - may / may not / might / might not / could
- DEDUCTION OF SOMETHING TRUE:
 - must
- DEDUCTION OF SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLE:
 - can't

POSSIBILITY & CERTAINTY

- She might come soon
- She may be in the wrong room
- She must be on the bus (I'm sure it's a good guess)
- She can't be at home (I'm sure this isn't true)

Let's practice!

- It isn't necessary for you to take a jacket.

You...

- I advise you to see a dentist.

You...

- You aren't allowed to talk during the exam.

You...

- Tom knows how to speak Spanish.

Tom...

- It is possible that Jake is in his room.

Jake...