

Can, could, shall, should, will, would, might and must are all examples of modal auxiliary verbs.

We use modal verbs in different ways e.g. to say that something is necessary or possible or to give advice.

I must go now!
I could come this afternoon.
You should drive more carefully.

Forms of Modals:

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| 1. A modal verb is always the first verb in a verb phrase.
<i>I might go to school.</i>
<i>I shall go to school.</i> | 4. Modals do not have do or does in questions.
<i>Can I go?</i>
<i>Must you go?</i> |
| 2. A modal verb never has an ending like 's' or 'ed'.
<i>She may walks to school.</i> Incorrect
<i>She may walk to school.</i> Correct | 5. To make a negative, <i>not</i> or <i>n't</i> is added to the modal.
<i>I cannot go. / I can't go.</i>
<i>I mustn't go.</i> |
| 3. The form of a modal verb is always the infinitive without 'to'.
<i>I can go.</i>
<i>I could go.</i>
<i>I shall go.</i> | Most modals talk about the present or the future.
<i>I will go to school tomorrow.</i>
<i>I might come to the picnic.</i>
<i>We can go now.</i>

<i>Could</i> is the past tense form of the modal, <i>can</i> .
<i>When I went to school yesterday, I couldn't see you.</i> |

Should

Should is used to say that we think something is right.

It is a good thing or the best thing for someone to do. We use should when we are giving someone advice.

He should always listen to his parents.
I think I should go home now.
We should leave now. It is getting late.

Exercise 1

Maria is doing a speaking test soon. Look at the sentences below.

The sentences have some advice on what to do in the test. Imagine you are talking to Maria.

Use should or shouldn't and give her the advice. The first one is done for you as an example.

- Say hello to the examiner. **Answer:** *You should say hello to the examiner.*
- Look at the examiner.
- Tell the examiner if you don't understand something.
- Do not speak too quietly.
- Listen carefully to the examiner's questions.
- Don't ask the examiner if you have passed the test.



Must

Must is used to say that someone is obligated to do something. It is necessary. When we use it for ourselves, we mean that we really need to do something.

I must tidy this room. It's very messy.

I must phone my mother tonight. She always worries about me.

The negative of must is mustn't.

I mustn't forget my carkeys.

When we use must with other people, it has a very strong meaning.



John

Exercise 2

John has some problems. He will tell you his problems. Give him some strong advice.

Complete the sentences with **must**. The first one is done for you..

a. John: I always lose my keys. **You: Answer:** *You must remember where you put them!*

b. John: I always forget my mother's birthday. **You: Answer:** *You must write....*

c. John: I always eat junk food. **You: Answer:** *You must eat...*

d. John: I never exercise. **You: Answer:** *You must exercise...*

e. John: I never brush my teeth. **You: Answer:** *You must brush your...*

f. John: I smoke twenty cigarettes a day. **You: Answer:** *You must stop...*

Have to

Have to is **different** to modal verbs like *must* or *should* because it can have other forms.

(Note how 'have' changes below in the positive and negative forms.)

Forms of Have to:

1. Positive Forms

I have to go to school.

You have to go to school.

He / she / it has to go to school.

We have to go to school.

They have to go to school.

2. Negative Forms

I don't have to go to school.

You don't have to go to school.

He / she / it doesn't have to go to school.

We don't have to go to school.

3. Have to has a past tense.

The past tense of have to is had to.

I had to go home early yesterday because I was sick.

You had to go home early....

He / she / it had to go home early....

They didn't have to go home early.

4. To make a question, add *do* or *does* for the present tense and *did* for the past.

Do you have to go to school today? Yes I do.

Does your sister have to go to work today?

Yes she does.

Did you have to do housework when you were young?

Yes, I did.

Have to is very similar in meaning to **must**.

But have to is used when someone like a doctor or the police, or a **rule** or **law** says that we are **obligated** to do something.

At school we have to call our teachers 'Sir' and 'Miss'. (This is a school rule.)

My boss says I have to finish this work tonight. (My boss says this.)

When a couple get married, the man has to pay his bride's father some money. (This is the custom.)

We have to check in at the airport three hours before our flight. (This is an airline rule.)

Don't have to means that something is **unnecessary**.

You don't have to help me with my homework tonight.

He doesn't have to catch a bus. I can drive him.

Answer Key:

Exercise 1: b. You should look at the examiner. c. You should tell the examiner if you don't understand something. d. You shouldn't speak too quietly. e. You should listen carefully to the examiner's questions. f. You shouldn't ask the examiner if you have passed the test..

Exercise 2: (Sample answers) b. You must write the date of her birthday in your diary. c. You must buy healthy food. d. You must exercise three or four times a week. e. You must brush your teeth twice a day. f. You must stop smoking.