

Modals

Modals are helping verbs. Modals cannot function as main verbs. except in few cases. They are called modal auxiliaries because they are used to express certain conceptions of mind like- **ability, possibility, permission, suggestion, obligation etc.**

Characteristics of Modals

1. Modals are never used alone. They are always used with a principal Verb that is expressed or understood.
2. Modals don't change according to the number or gender of the subject.
3. Modals don't have the infinitive form. They are always followed by the base form (first form) of the verb.
4. Only four of the Modals (can, may, shall, will) have past forms.
5. 'Need' and 'dare' can also be used in the do/did forms and then take the infinitive form 'to'.
6. 'Need' and 'dare' can also be used as ordinary verbs.
7. Used, referred to as 'used to', is used only in the past Tense.

Uses of modals

Use of CAN

1. Can shows power, capacity and ability.

Capacity: It is physical. Ability: It is mental. Capacity + Ability: Capability

Examples:

- a) Can you push this car?
- b) He can speak three languages.
- e) He can solve any problem.

2. Generally, May is used for permission but in modern grammar even can is used for taking permission.

- a) Can I sit here and do my work? tiredly request
- b) You can't smoke in this area.
- c) Can she take your notebook for a day?

3. Can is used for giving an Offer:

- a) I can give you a lift to the office.
- b) Can I get you something to have?
- c) Can I assist you with your shopping?

4. For polite requests as well, even Can/ Could / Will is used.

- a) Will you please do this for me?

- b) Could you please share your number?
- c) Can you help me with my homework?

Use of MAY

May: It shows possibility and wish. It is also used to take permission.

Examples:

- a) It may rain soon.
- b) It's not too late, Richa may come.
- c) May I use your pen?
- d) May God bless you!

Use of COULD

1. Could is the past form of can. Like can, it also shows power, capacity and ability. If the sentence that the action is of past, we use could, not can.

Example: -

- a. In childhood, I could run like you, but not now
 - b. He could have easily done that but he didn't
2. Could is used for past ability (conditional) and suggesting a future possibility as well
 - a. If I practice more, I could have won the race
 - b. We could go to the movies tonight
 - c. They could visit us next week
 3. Use 'could have' to express a past eligibility, possibility, or missed opportunity
- EXAMPLE: -
- A. Past abilities: she could have won the race if she had trained more.
 - B. Possibilities: they could have taken a different route to avoid traffic.
 - C. Missed opportunity: I could have bought that painting but I didn't

Use of might

1. Might is the past of may and it just shows less possibilities than may.

Example: -

- a. Now it's too late, he might come
 - b. Now the clouds have parted, it might rain
2. Might is used to show speculation
 - a. They might have already left for the airport
 - b. I think she might have forgotten about the meeting
 3. Might is used to show past possibility (when used with 'have')
 - a. She might have forgotten her keys at home
 - b. I might have left my book on the bus.

SHOULD/MUST/UGHT TO

USE OF SHOULD

1. Should is used to show expectation
 - a. He should arrive at the meeting by 2 PM
 - b. The package should be delivered tomorrow
2. It shows obligation/necessity

- a. You should pay your bills on time
- b. Students should complete their homework assignment
- 3. It is used to show criticism/disapproval:
 - A. You shouldn't have lied about it
 - B. She should have been more careful with work
- 4. It shows advice/recommendations well:
 - a. You should eat more vegetable for a healthier diet
 - b. I think you should see a doctor about the persistent cough.

Note: - if the sentence has **lest** we use **should**

- a. Read lest you would fail. X
Read lest you should fail. ✓
- b. Run lest you should miss the bus
- 5. Use 'should have' to indicate an obligation, advice, or regret regarding a past action.
Example: -
 - a. Obligation: you should have completed the assignment on time
 - b. Advice: you should have asked for help when you were stuck.
 - c. Regret: I should have called her back, but I forgot

Use of must

- 1. It is used to show strong recommendation
 - a. You must try this book, it's worth reading
 - b. You must watch this movies, it's an incredible story
- 2. It is used to show prohibition (in the negative form "must not" or "mustn's")
 - a. Mustn't Park your car here
 - b. Students must not use their phones during the exam
- 3. It shows deduction or interference
 - a. It's 11PM, and you have not come yet, you must be with your friend
 - b. You are coughing and sneezing; you must be sick

Use of "ought"

- 1. It used to show moral obligation:
 - a. You ought to tell the truth in all situation.
 - b. She ought not to steal from others
- 2. It is used to show recommendation:
 - a. You ought to try the new restaurant in town; the food is excellent
 - b. He ought to see a doctor if he's not feeling well

Use of shall/will

Both are used to show future action

According to modern grammar with all subject (I, we, you, he) will is used not shall

- But according to traditional grammar with I and we, shall is used and with rest of the subject (he, se, you) will used
- The use of shall and will takes a U-turn when the action shows certainty
He will go to Delhi tomorrow (expected to go)
He shall go to Delhi (certain to go)

Use of would

Would: it is used in conditional sentences beginning with (if+sub+were/had)

It is also used in sentences that has

- Rather/sooner/better/as soon v₁ as
- Love like to v₁
- Mind+v₄

Example:

- A. If he had to helped me, I could have failed (X)
If he had not helped me, I could have failed (✓)

b. I like to help you. (would)

c. you mind wating for me outside? (would)

d. if I were the PM, I Do a lot (would)

e. he will as soon die as beg. (X)

he would as soon die as beg ✓

f. I shall rather fail then copy. (X)

I would rather fail than copy ✓