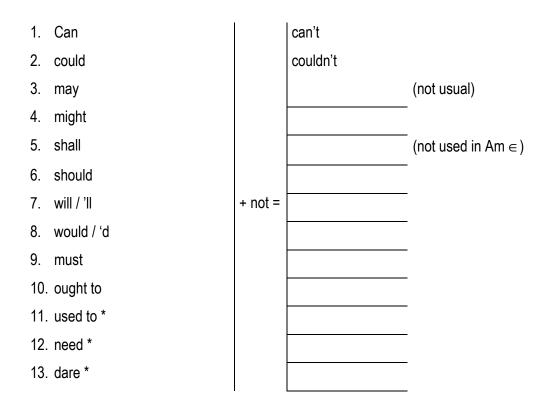
modal verbs



*Can be modal verbs or lexical verbs.

E.g. He <u>needn't</u> go (M.V.) He <u>doesn't need</u> to go (L.V.)

In general:

- 1. Followed by infinitive without **to**. E.g. He can \emptyset <u>swim</u>.
- 2. No –ed, -s (3^{rd} persona sing), -ing. E.g. She <u>must</u> \emptyset study.
- 3. No **do, does, did** to make **questions or negations**. E.g. Will you come? / You shouldn't smoke.
- 4. Used to talk about: permission, obligation, possibility, probablity, prediction, intention...
- Can be used with perfect infinitive (have + participle) to talk about the past (expressing regrets). E.g. You could <u>have told</u> me you were coming.

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can

Ability = be able to

E.g. He <u>can</u> speak English but he <u>can't</u> write it very well.

Permission = be allowed to = (may, + formal)

E.g. Can (or may) I smoke in here?

Theoretical possibility = (may, factural possibility)

E.g. Anybody <u>can</u> make mistakes.

Requests:

E.g. Can you open the window, please?

<u>coul d</u>

Past ability:

E.g. I never <u>could</u> play the banjo.

Present or future permission:

E.g. <u>Could</u> I smoke in here?

Present possibility (theoretical or factual):

E.g. We <u>could</u> go to the concert.

Unreal conditions (2nd conditional):

E.g. If we had more money, we <u>could</u> buy a car.

Requests:

Could you open the window, please?

may

Permission (+ formal tahn can):

E.g. You <u>may</u> borrow my car if you like.

BUT: Negative permission = prohibition: mustn't

E.g. You <u>mustn't borrow my car</u>.

Possibility (usually factual):

E.g. The road <u>may</u> be blocked.

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might (There's no important difference between may and might)

Permission (rare):

E.g. <u>Might</u> I smoke in here?

Possibility (theoretical or factual:

E.g. We <u>might</u> go to the concert.

shall

Intention (1st person):

E.g. I shan't be long.

Suggestion:

E.g. Shall we go to the cinema?

Offers:

E.g. Shall I help you? Shall I carry your suitcase?

<u>shoul d</u>

Obligation (advice):

E.g. You should do as he says

After certain expressions:

It's a pity that

I'm surprised that (e.g.) you <u>should</u> say this to me.

I'm sorry that

It's odd that

will

Willingness:

E.g. He'll help you if you ask him.

Polite requests:

E.g. <u>Will</u> you please open the window?

Intention (usually 1st person) (spontaneous, at the moment of speaking):

E.g. I'll write as soon as I can.

Prediction:

E.g. It <u>will</u> rain tomorrow.

Offers:

E.g. I'll help you.

<u>woul d</u>

Would = used to:

E.g. Every morning, he <u>would</u> go for a walk.

2nd conditional:

E.g. If I didn't stop him, he <u>would</u> smoke too much.

Invitation:

Would you like tea or would you rather have coffe?

Would rather = prefer:

E.g. l'<u>d</u> rather have coffe.

l'<u>d</u> rather not say.

Requests:

Would you do me a favour, please?

<u>must</u>

Obligation (past = had to):

E.g. You <u>must</u> be back by 10 o'clock.

Prohibition or no necessary:

Needn't, don't have to:

E.g. You <u>needn't</u> be back by 10 o'clock.

Mustn't:

E.g. You <u>mustn't</u> smoke in here.

Deduction (negative: can't):

E.g. There <u>must</u> be a mistake.

There can't be a mistake.

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<u>ought to</u>

Obligation (- categorical than must or have to):

E.g. You ought to start at once.

<u>exercise:</u>

Complete these sentences using a modal verb to express deduction, permission, obligation, prediction, etc.

- 1. He ______ speak 4 languages.
- 2. I looked everywhere for the book but I _____ find it.
- 3. You've been travelling all day. You ______ be tired.
- 4. Where's Tom? I don't Know. He _____ be in his office.
- 5. _____ we go to the cinema tonight? Sorry but I _____ rather not.
- 6. You ______ hurried because the train was late.
- 7. He's just had dinner. He _____ be hungry again.
- 8. You ______ stop smoking. That _____ be a good idea.
- 9. Was she ill? I'm not sure, she _____ been ill.
- 10. I felt so ill that I _____ go to hospital.
- 11. You've got plenty of time. You _____ hurry.
- 12. My grandmother loved music. She _____ play the piano well.
- 13. _____ I use your phone?
- 14. You really ______ work harder if you want to pass the "Selectivitat".
- 15. You ______ smoke if you like.
- 16. When I woke up this morning, the light was on. I ______ forgotten to turn it off last night.
- 17. You ______ shout. The baby is asleep.
- Once in the restaurant, there were no free tables. We ______ reserved one.