

MODALS AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS



**LEARN EVERYTHING YOU CAN,
ANYTIME YOU CAN, FROM
ANYONE YOU CAN - THERE WILL
ALWAYS COME A TIME WHEN
YOU WILL BE GRATEFUL YOU DID.**

SARAH CALDWELL

What is modality?



- Modality is about a speaker's or a writer's attitude towards the utterance. A speaker or writer can express *certainty or probability, possibility, suggestion, obligation, necessity, ability* and another attitude by using modal verbs and expressions.
- Speakers often have different opinions about the same thing. So using modals is often subjective.
- Modals and their equivalents usually go before another notional verb and they change or amplify its meaning.

Modal Verbs



- *Ability* – can
- *Possibility* - can, could, may, might
- *Permission* – can, may
- *Request* – can/could, will/would, may/might
- *Obligation* – must
- *Lack of necessity* – needn't

Modal Verbs



- *Conclusion* – must, should, can't
- *Probability* – may, might, can, could
- *Prohibition* – mustn't, can't, may not
- *Advice* – should, ought to, could, might, had better
- *Offer* – shall, should, would
- *Suggestion* – shall, would, should

Equivalents of Modals



- *Necessity* – need to
- *Ability* – to be able to
- *Obligation* – have to, be to
- *Lack of obligation* – (do/does/will) not have to
- *Permission* – allow to, let

"Education needs to address the world around our learners but also the world within our learners."

Sir Ken Robinson

Characteristics



- ❖ Modals are followed by a **BARE INFINITIVE** (apart from *ought to*)
- I can swim.
- You should listen to the doctor.
- ❖ They **lack** some **tenses** or **non-personal forms** (no infinitive, gerunds or past participles). No **-s** in the **3rd** person of **singular** form.
- He can go to the cinema.
- He must have been at home at 3 o'clock.
- ❖ **No auxiliaries** to form negative or interrogative sentences.
- He shouldn't go alone to the doctor.
- Excuse me, could I go home earlier, please?
- ❖ **Equivalents of Modals are used in the same way as all the notional verbs** (with **to infinitive**, all the tense and personal forms).

Modals with perfect & continuous infinitives



- The structure “have + past participle (3rd form of the verb)” is called a perfect infinitive.
- The perfect infinitive after a modal refers to the past action (must have *done*, can't have *done*, needn't have *done*, ought to have *done* etc.).
- The structure “be + present participle (-ing form)” is called a continuous infinitive.
- The continuous infinitive after a modal is used to express a continuing action (must be *doing*, may be *doing*, can be *doing*, needn't be *doing* etc.).

Suggestion



- You *could* talk to your parents about whether you *should* marry her.
- You *might* consider taking up meditation to help you sleep better.
- *Shouldn't* we have a pizza instead?

“ Not everyone has equal abilities, but **everyone** should have equal opportunity for **education.**”

— John F. Kennedy

Advice



- You *should* brush your teeth twice a day.
- We *could* meet for dinner at the weekend.
(less strong)
- We *ought to* take a taxi, it's too far to walk.
- You *had better* study for the exam tomorrow.

“THE BAKER
SHOULDN'T
COMMENT
ON HIS DOUGH.”

Hebraic Proverb

Dilemma and Advice



“I’m going out with two girls. One is very beautiful but has no money, the other is ugly and has lots of money. Who *should* I marry?”

“ Well, I’m sure that you *must* really love the beautiful one, so I think you *should* marry her.”

“OK, thank you very much for your advice.”

“Don’t mention it. By the way, I wonder if you *could* give me the name and telephone number of the other girl?”

Offer



- *Would* you like to join my friends and me tonight?
- *Shall* I open the window?
- *Would* you like some coffee?
- Who *should* I say *is calling*?



Ability



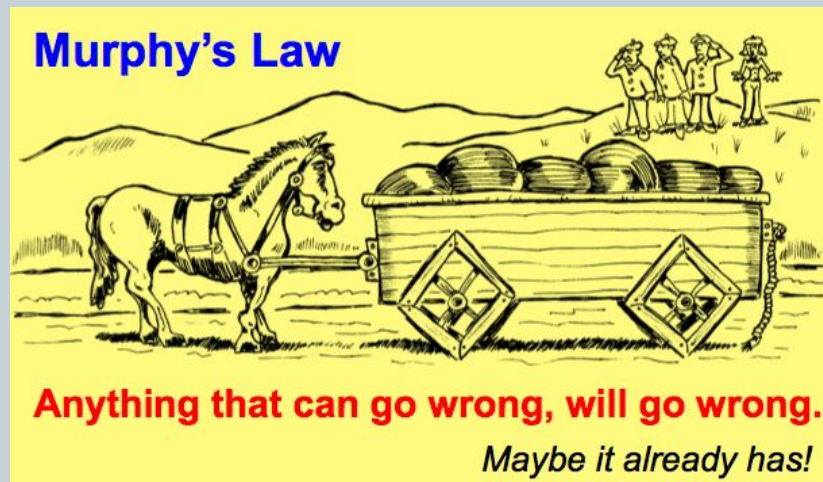
- I *can't* pilot a ship.
- I *am unable* to find the schedule for today.
- I knew I *was able to* win before we started playing.
- I *can* speak several languages.

“ Music
can change
the world
because
it can
change
people. ”

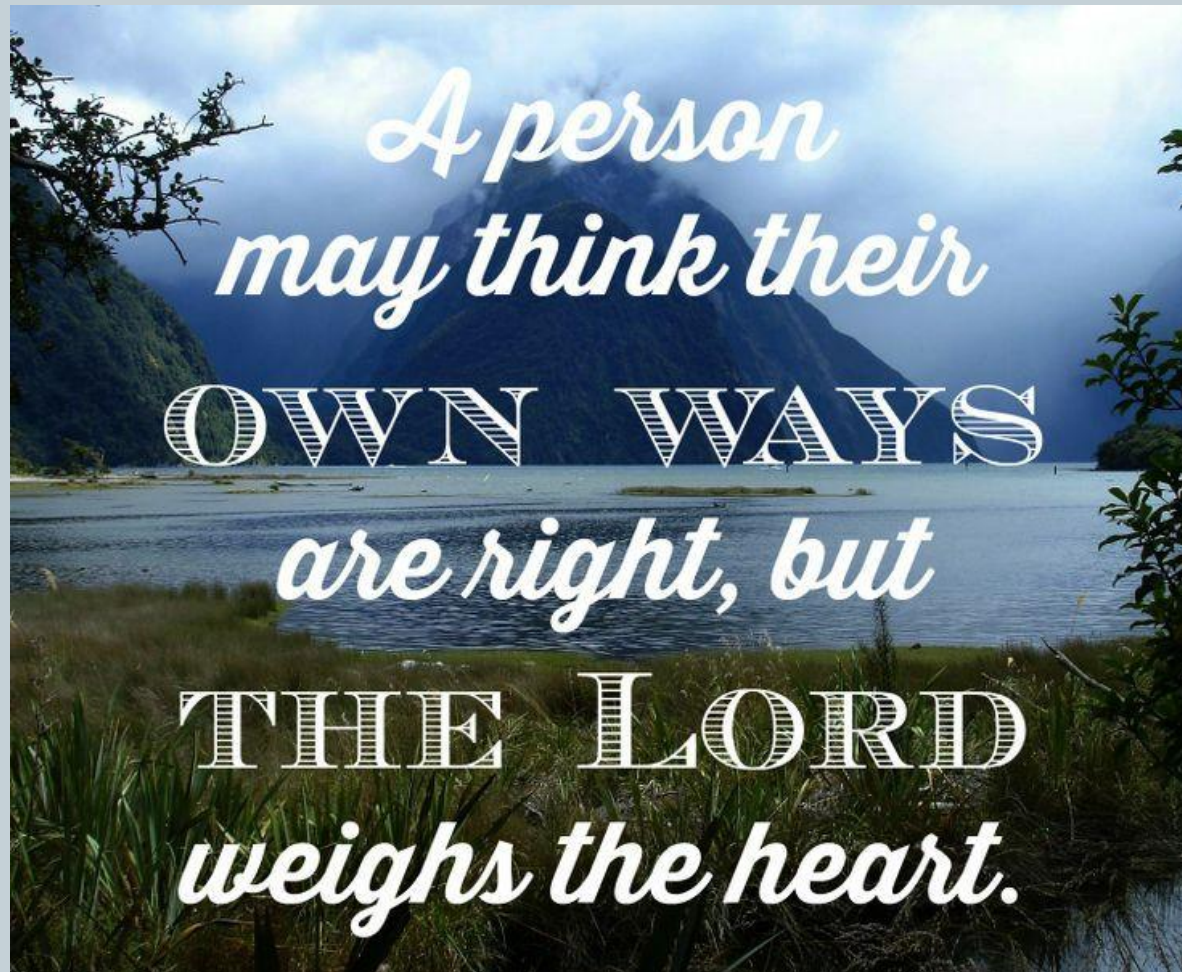
Bono

Possibility

- Smoking *can* cause cancer.
- John *could* be fired for stealing.
- I *may* see you tomorrow before you leave.
- I *might* go swimming after work today. (less probable)



Probability



Permission



- *Can* I wear my sunglasses in my work uniform today?
- *May* I please have a glass of water?
- *May* I interrupt you?



May I borrow a pencil please?

Obligation



- You *must* be at work tomorrow before 8:00.
- You *mustn't* be late.
- I *have to* switch off the light before leaving.

WE MUST
EXCHANGE WHISPERS
with God
BEFORE SHOUTS
WITH THE WORLD.

Lack of Obligation



- You *don't have to* clean your room today.
- You *needn't* water the garden this evening. It's going to rain tonight.
- They *needn't have* translated all the text in written.
- Everything will be OK. You *needn't* worry.
- The food is included in your package tour, so you *don't have to* pay for it.

Conclusion

- He *must* live near here because he comes to work on foot.
- You're going to China? That *should* be interesting. (less certain)
- It *can't* be a burglar.
All the doors and windows are locked.

“WHAT EVERYBODY
says MUST
BE TRUE.”

Italian Proverb

Prohibition



- You *can't* park here, sir.
- You *can* wear jeans but you *can't* wear trainers in that bar.
- You *mustn't* speak when the teacher is speaking.
- You *may not* have dessert until you finish your dinner.
- You *can't* overtake another car here.

Complete the sentences with must(n't), need(n't) or should(n't):



1. Oh no – my phone's dead. I _____ find my charger straight away!
2. You _____ finish that essay tonight if you're too tired. Midday tomorrow is the deadline.
3. What are you doing here? _____ you be at college?
4. He really _____ have told his brother about this present. It was supposed to be a secret.
5. You _____ pay to go into this exhibition because I've got my membership card with me.
6. You _____ make so much noise. We'll be asked to leave the restaurant if you don't stop shouting.
7. I'm going to be in trouble. I _____ have texted my mum earlier this afternoon and I completely forgot.
8. You _____ have gone to the bus station, you can book tickets online.

Choose the correct alternative:



1. You must be / can't be very proud of your daughter winning the race
2. I expected my boyfriend to call after work last night, but he didn't. I suppose he must be / must have been too tired.
3. That group is so famous now, it must be / can't be easy to get tickets to see them perform.
4. I'm sure we can get online here. We must be using / can't be using the right password.
5. I've just rung the garage to check whether they've fixed my car, but I can't get an answer. I suppose they may have / may be having a break in the yard.
6. I don't know why you wanted to stay at that party. You might have enjoyed / can't have enjoyed talking to all those boring people.
7. I can't go out now. We're getting a new TV and the store may be delivering / must be delivering it this morning.
8. You must be / must have been thirsty after playing tennis all afternoon. Shall I get you a drink?