# Should, ought to, have to, must

#### Have to

I have to do something = it is necessary to do it, I am obliged to do it: ☐ You can't turn right here. You have to turn left. You have to turn left here. I have to wear glasses for reading. ☐ George can't come out with us this evening. He has to work late. ☐ Last week Tina broke her arm and had to go to hospital. I haven't had to go to the doctor for ages. We use do/does/did in questions and negative sentences (for the present and past simple): □ What do I have to do to get a new driving licence? (not What have I to do?) ☐ Karen doesn't have to work Saturdays. (not Karen hasn't to) ☐ Why did you have to leave early? You can use have to with will and might/may: ☐ If the pain gets worse, you'll have to go to the doctor. ☐ I might have to work late tomorrow evening. or I may have to work ...

(= it's possible that I will have to)

## Must

Must is similar to have to:  It's later than I thought. I must go. or I have to go.
You can use must to give your own opinion (for example, to say what you think is necessary, or to recommend someone to do something). Have to is also possible:  I haven't spoken to Sue for ages. I must phone her. (= I say this is necessary)  Mark is a really nice person. You must meet him. (I recommend this)
We use have to (not must) to say what someone is obliged to do. The speaker is not giving his/her own opinion:  I have to work from 8.30 to 5.30 every day. (a fact, not an opinion)  Jane has to travel a lot for her work.
But must is often used in written rules and instructions:  Applications for the job must be received by 18 May.  (exam instruction) You must write your answers in ink.
You cannot use must to talk about the past:  Use had to leave early. (not we must)

## Mustn't and don't have to

#### Mustn't and don't have to are completely different:

You mustn't do something = it is necessary that you do not do it (so don't do it):

- You must keep it a secret. You mustn't tell anyone. (= don't tell anyone)
- ☐ I promised I would be on time.

  I mustn't be late. (= I must be on time)

You don't have to do something = you don't need to do it (but you can if you want):

- You don't have to tell him, but you can if you want to.
- I don't have to be at the meeting, but I think I'll go anyway.

# Have got to

You can use have got to instead of have to. So you can say:

- I've got to work tomorrow. or I have to work tomorrow.
- ☐ When has Liz got to go? or When does Liz have to go?

## Should

You should do something = it is a good thing to do or the right thing to do. You can use should to give advice or to give an opinion:
☐ You look tired. You should go to bed.
The government should do more to reduce crime.
Should we invite Susan to the party?' 'Yes, I think we should.'
We often use should with I think / I don't think / Do you think ?:  I think the government should do more to reduce crime.  I don't think you should work so hard.  'Do you think I should apply for this job?' 'Yes, I think you should.'
You shouldn't do something = it isn't a good thing to do:  \[ \textstyle \text{You shouldn't believe everything you read in the newspapers.} \]
Should is not as strong as must or have to:
☐ You should apologise. (= it would be a good thing to do)
☐ You must apologise. / You have to apologise. (= you have no alternative)

## Should

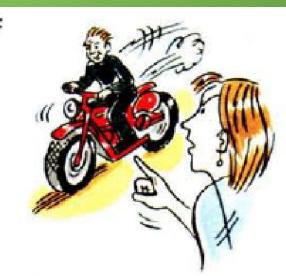
You can use should when something is not right or what you expect:

- ☐ I wonder where Tina is. She should be here by now. (= she isn't here yet, and this is not normal)
- ☐ The price on this packet is wrong. It should be £2.50, not £3.50.
- ☐ That man on the motorbike should be wearing a helmet.

We also use should to say that we expect something to happen:

- □ She's been studying hard for the exam, so she should pass. (= I expect her to pass)
- ☐ There are plenty of hotels in the town. It shouldn't be difficult to find somewhere to stay.

  (= I don't expect it to be difficult)



## Should have done

You should have done something = you didn't do it, but it would have been the right thing to do:

You missed a great party last night. You should have come. Why didn't you?

(= you didn't come, but it would have been good to come)

I wonder why they're so late. They should have arrived long ago.

You shouldn't have done something = you did it, but it was the wrong thing to do:

I'm feeling sick. I shouldn't have eaten so much. (= I ate too much)

She shouldn't have been listening to our conversation. It was private.

(= she was listening)

Compare should (do) and should have (done):

You look tired. You should go to bed now.

You went to bed very late last night. You should have gone to bed earlier.

## Ought to

#### Ought to ...

You can use ought to instead of should in the sentences on this page. We say 'ought to do' (with to):

- □ Do you think I ought to apply for this job? (= Do you think I should apply ... ?)
- □ Jack ought not to go to bed so late. (= Jack shouldn't go ...)
- ☐ It was a great party last night. You ought to have come.
- She's been studying hard for the exam, so she ought to pass.