

MODAL VERBS

Modal	Example	Function
MAY	May I go to the conference?	Asking for permission.
	I may be able to help you with your project tomorrow.	Future possibility.
MIGHT	We might be interrupting their lunch.	Present possibility.
	They might make us an offer.	Future possibility.
CAN	They can fix the problem.	Ability.
	They can't fix the problem.	Inability.
	Can I have a cup of coffee?	Request
	Can I smoke in here?	Asking for permission.
COULD	Could you help me?	Request.
	Could I take tomorrow off?	Asking for permission.
	We could try unplugging it?	Suggestion.
	I could come to LA next month.	Future possibility.
	I left London, so I could get a job here.	Ability in the past.
WILL	I'll give you a call on Monday	Promise.
	I'll take these figures with me.	Instant decision.
	We'll book your tickets if you like.	Offer.
	We will see an increase in salaries next year.	Certain prediction.
WOULD	Would you mind if I opened a window?	Asking for permission.
	Would you make me a coffee?	Request.
	Would you be available at 6pm tonight?	Making arrangements.
	Would you like to go out some time?	Invitation.
	Would you prefer the window seat or the aisle?	Preferences.
SHALL	Shall I get the phone? Or will you?	Asking what to do.
	Shall I call a cab?	Offer.
	Shall we say 10pm at Roxy's then?	Suggestion.
SHOULD	You should see a doctor, you don't look well.	Advice.
	We should get a specialist.	Recommending action.
	Salaries should go up next year.	Uncertain prediction.
OUGHT TO	You ought to go to the dentist before you leave.	Advice.
MUST	I must leave now to catch my train.	Obligation/ Necessity
	You mustn't ask too many questions.	Prohibition.

FUNCTIONS OF MODAL VERBS

<u>Ability</u>	<u>Possibility</u> <u>Probability</u>	<u>Permission</u> <u>(ask/refuse)</u>		<u>Request</u>	<u>Offer</u>
<i>Habilidad</i>	<i>Posibilidad</i> <i>probabilidad</i>	<i>Permiso</i>		<i>Petición consejo</i>	<i>Ofrecimiento</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Can</u> ➤ <u>Could</u> ➤ <u>Was able to</u> ➤ <u>Couldn't</u> ➤ <u>Wan't able to</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Might</u> ➤ <u>May</u> ➤ <u>Must</u> ➤ <u>Could</u> ➤ <u>Can't be</u> ➤ <u>Can he be?</u> 	Pedir <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Can</u> ➤ <u>Could</u> ➤ <u>May</u> ➤ <u>Might</u> 	Rechazar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Mustn't</u> ➤ <u>Can't</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Can</u> ➤ <u>Could</u> ➤ <u>Will ('ll)</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Would you like ...?</u> ➤ <u>Shall I/we...?</u> ➤ <u>Will ...?</u>
<u>Suggestion</u>	<u>Advice</u> <u>Strong obligation</u>	<u>Obligation</u> <u>Necessity</u>		<u>Absence of necessity</u>	<u>Prohibition</u>
<i>Sugerencia</i>	<i>Consejo</i> <i>Obligación fuerte</i>	<i>Obligación</i> <i>necesidad</i>		<i>Ausencia de necesidad</i>	<i>Prohibición</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Could</u> ➤ <u>Shall I/we...?</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Should</u> ➤ <u>Ought to</u> ➤ <u>Had better</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Must</u> ➤ <u>Have to</u> ➤ <u>Have got to</u> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Needn't</u> ➤ <u>Don't need /don't have to</u> ➤ <u>Didn't / didn't have to</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Mustn't</u> ➤ <u>Can't</u>

USING MODAL AND SEMI-MODAL VERBS: A GENERAL TABLE

ABILITY	can	Horses can gallop very fast. She can dance beautifully.
	could	Could you catch your train? They could play tennis quite well.
	to be able	They haven't been able to win a match since last year.
PERMISSION	may	May I come in?
	can	Can I stay here?
	could	Could I go to the disco with Meg?
	might	Might I ask you not to be so late next time?
POSSIBILITY	may	It may snow tomorrow.
	might	It might rain in the afternoon.
	can	Can it be true?
	could	He could arrive this evening if he comes by air.
IMPOSSIBILITY	can't	That can't be right.
PROHIBITION	must not	You must not give any cigarettes to John.
	can't	You can't smoke in this room.
	not to be to	You are not to invite him again.
	may not	You may not open the window.
POLITE REQUESTS	may	May I have some more sugar?
	might	Might I have a glass of beer?
	can	Can you call me this afternoon?
	could	Could you lend me your dictionary, please?
	will	Will you please answer the telephone?
	would	Would you please help them?
DEDUCTIONS	must	He must be about forty this year.
	can't/couldn't	She can't be as wrong as you say.
	will	That will be our friend coming for dinner.
	would	They would be in London now.
	should	She should be at home at this time in the evening.
DUTY	must	You must respect old people.
	should	She should be kinder to her brother.
	ought to	You ought to work harder.
ORDERS	must	You must do the washing up.
	shall	You shall bring your homework next time.
	will	You will stay at home tonight.
	to be to	You are to be more silent in the classroom.
NECESSITY	must	You must study the whole chapter.
	to have to	I have to be at the station at 4 o'clock.
ABSENCE OF NECESSITY	needn't/don't need to	You needn't/don't need to come if you can't.
	don't have to	You don't have to leave if you don't want to.
SUGGESTION	shall	Shall I help you?
INVITATIONS	will	Will you come dancing?
	would	Would you like to come for a drink?
HABITS	used to	She used to play the violin.
	would	She would go to the market on Saturday mornings.
DARE	dare	I dare not ask them to come.
ADVICE	ought to	You ought to study more next year.
	must	You must visit the U.S.A.
	should	You should see the dentist at least once a year.