

Modal verbs

2º NB inglés

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May (not), might (not) +infinitive

Use	Examples	Notes/Problems
To say what is possibly going to happen (but you aren't sure)	<i>Take your umbrella. It might rain.</i> <i>Jane may not come tomorrow.</i>	(= it's a possibility) NOT <i>It's possible that it rains.</i> (=maybe she won't come) Might and may are the same, but might is more common in spoken English

Modal verbs of obligation

must/mustn't + infinitive

Use	Examples	Notes/Problems
Use must : For obligation + For strong recommendation	<i>I must remember her birthday</i> <i>You <u>must</u> see that film</i>	Must is especially used when the recommendation comes from the speaker. It is always stressed for strong recommendation
Use mustn't : When you want to say "not allowed", "you can't"	<i>You <u>mustn't</u> park here.</i> <i>You <u>mustn't</u> miss the concert.</i>	

Modal verbs of obligation

have to/don't have to, should/shouldn't + infinitive

Use	Examples	Notes/Problems
Use have to : for obligation	<i>You have to drive on the left.</i> <i>I have to work on Saturdays.</i>	Have to is especially used for laws, or general / external obligation
Use don't have to : for no obligation / necessity	<i>I don't have to work on Saturdays.</i> <i>It's free; you don't have to pay.</i>	(= it's not necessary) NOT I mustn't go to work
Use should / shouldn't : for recommendation / advice	<i>You should drive more slowly.</i> <i>You shouldn't eat so much.</i>	You can also use ought to . E.g. <i>You ought to drive more slowly</i>

Modals of deduction

must, might/could, can't + infinitive

Use	Examples	Notes/Problems
Use must to say that you are sure that something is (logically) true	<i>He must be out. All the lights are off.</i> <i>They must be Italian. They're speaking Italian.</i>	Don't confuse with must for obligation. The opposite of <i>must be</i> is <i>can't be</i> ; NOT mustn't be
Use might/could to say that something is possibly true	<i>She might be working. I'm not sure.</i> <i>He might be at home or he might be at the gym.</i>	You can also use may instead of could. It is more formal. Don't use cant for possibilities. NOT <i>He can be at home</i>
Use can't to say that something is impossible	<i>It can't be true! I don't believe it.</i> <i>They can't be in New York! I saw them this morning.</i>	NOT <i>couldn't be</i>

Online exercises

- Modal Exercise 1 can, could, have to, must, might and should
- Modal Exercise 2 have to and must
- Modal Exercise 3 might, must, should, could, have to and ought to
- Modal Exercise 4 couldn't and might not