

## English Grammar - Modal Verbs

Modal verbs change the mode of a sentence. The main verbs are always in the infinitive form without 'to' (except 'need to' and 'have to'). Each modal verb has only one form (except 'need to' and 'have to').

Modal verbs are used in the present tense, but often refer to a future intention.

Context	Modal Verb(s)	Examples
<b>ability</b> ( <i>habilidade</i> )	can / can't	I <b>can</b> play piano. I <b>can't</b> play piano. <b>Can</b> you play piano?
<b>permission</b> ( <i>permissão</i> )	can / can't (informal) may / may not (formal)	<b>Can</b> I go now, please? <b>May</b> I go now, please? (formal) You <b>can't</b> use your phone. You <b>may not</b> use your phone. (formal)
<b>necessity</b> ( <i>necessidade</i> )	need to	I <b>need to</b> eat something. He <b>needs to</b> eat something.
<b>obligation</b> ( <i>obrigação</i> )	must / mustn't have to	We <b>must</b> pay for parking. You <b>mustn't</b> use a calculator. I <b>have to</b> submit a report. He <b>has to</b> submit a report.
<b>option</b> ( <i>opção</i> )	can don't / doesn't need to don't / doesn't have to	You <b>can</b> use a calculator, if you want. You <b>don't need to</b> pay a tip. He <b>doesn't need to</b> pay a tip. You <b>don't have to</b> eat everything. He <b>doesn't have to</b> eat everything.
<b>possibility</b> ( <i>possibilidade</i> )	might / might not	I <b>might</b> go to Europe next year. I <b>might not</b> go to the office tomorrow.
<b>probability</b> ( <i>probabilidade</i> )	must	He <b>must</b> be rich! You <b>must</b> be crazy!
<b>impossibility</b> ( <i>impossibilidade</i> )	can't	You <b>can't</b> be serious! He <b>can't</b> be English.
<b>advice / recommendation</b> ( <i>conselho</i> )	should / shouldn't	You <b>should</b> stop smoking. You <b>shouldn't</b> smoke so much.
<b>conditional</b> ( <i>condicional</i> )	would / wouldn't	If I was rich, I <b>would</b> buy a Ferrari. If I was rich, I <b>wouldn't</b> buy a Ferrari.
<b>availability</b> ( <i>disponibilidade</i> )	could / couldn't	I <b>could</b> go but I don't want to go. I <b>couldn't</b> go even if I wanted to go.

**Exercise 1 .** Complete the sentences with an appropriate modal verb.

1. Ted's flight from London was very long. He \_\_\_\_\_ be exhausted. (*probability*)
2. You \_\_\_\_\_ leave the table when you finish your food. (*option*)
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ study for my French test tomorrow. (*obligation*)
4. If I have a party on Saturday, \_\_\_\_\_ you go? (*availability*)
5. The professor said that it's a good idea to read the book, but we \_\_\_\_\_ read it. (*negative option*)
6. Jenny has a fever! She \_\_\_\_\_ go to the hospital. (*advice*)
7. You \_\_\_\_\_ take a credit card (*advice*) because the clinic \_\_\_\_\_ accept cash. (*negative possibility*)
8. In my job, I \_\_\_\_\_ train the new employees. (*obligation*)
9. Maria \_\_\_\_\_ be English because she doesn't speak English well! (*impossibility*)
10. We \_\_\_\_\_ forget to pay the rent tomorrow. (*negative obligation*)

**Exercise 2.** Describe the contexts:

1. He's wearing a white coat. **He must be a doctor.**

Context: \_\_\_\_\_ *Probability* \_\_\_\_\_

2. He is very good with people. **He should be a doctor.**

Context : \_\_\_\_\_

3. He seems to know everything about medicine. **He might be a doctor.**

Context: \_\_\_\_\_

4. change to "can" option

Context: \_\_\_\_\_

5. He is so rude and arrogant. **He can't be a doctor.**

Context: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 3.** Complete the following sentences with a suitable modal verb, then describe the context that you choose.

1. You \_\_\_\_\_ stop drinking. Context: \_\_\_\_\_
2. We \_\_\_\_\_ win the game! Context: \_\_\_\_\_
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ go to the beach tomorrow. Context: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWSUUiMbf40> (10 mins, Portuguese)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ5nqhFaqoY> (15 mins, Portuguese)