

## English Grammar: Modal Verbs - Obligation

### A. must/have to

The modal verbs “must” and “have to” are very similar in meaning. However, we use “must” to express a personal opinion - something is necessary or important for you to do. The modal verb “have to” is used to describe what somebody else has told you to do. For example:

- I **must** drink some water. (*I am thirsty*)
- I **have to** drink some water. (*The doctor needs a urine sample*)

**Exercise 1.** Choose MUST or HAVE TO for each of the following sentences.

1a. I \_\_\_\_\_ go to school tomorrow. (*I don't want to miss the maths test*)

1b. I \_\_\_\_\_ go to school tomorrow. (*My parents have demanded that I go*)

2a. You \_\_\_\_\_ wear appropriate clothes for your tennis match.  
(*You are not allowed to play unless you wear sports clothes*)

2b. You \_\_\_\_\_ wear appropriate clothes for your tennis match.  
(*If you don't wear sports clothes, you will be uncomfortable*)

3a. I \_\_\_\_\_ visit the Tower of London. (*I want to visit it*)

3b. I \_\_\_\_\_ visit the Tower of London. (*My boss told me to go*)

4a. He \_\_\_\_\_ do his homework. (*I am telling him to do it*)

4b. He \_\_\_\_\_ do his homework.  
(*If he wants to pass his test, I recommend that he do it*)

## B. Negative: mustn't/don't have to

There is a big difference between the modal verbs “mustn't” and “don't have to”:

- **mustn't** - it is essential to not do something. You don't have a choice.
- **don't have to** - it is not essential to do something. You have a choice.

For example:

- You **mustn't** drive the car. (*You don't have permission to drive the car*)
- You **don't have to** drive the car. (*You can drive the car if you want but it's not necessary*)

**Exercise 2.** Here are some school rules. Read them and complete the sentences below with “mustn't” or “don't have to”.

SCHOOL RULES:

- School uniform is to be worn at all times.
- Trainers are not allowed, but black or brown shoes can be used.
- Always write with a fountain pen or a ball pen but never a pencil.
- Do not eat or drink in school.
- Smoking is forbidden.
- Walk on the left in corridors and on the stairs.
- Running is not allowed.
- There is a choice between cricket and tennis in the summer.

1. You \_\_\_\_\_ smoke.
2. You \_\_\_\_\_ wear brown shoes.
3. You \_\_\_\_\_ wear trainers.
4. You \_\_\_\_\_ wear casual clothes.
5. You \_\_\_\_\_ play cricket in the Summer.
6. You \_\_\_\_\_ eat in school.
7. You \_\_\_\_\_ use a fountain pen.
8. You \_\_\_\_\_ use a pencil.
9. You \_\_\_\_\_ walk on the right.
10. You \_\_\_\_\_ run.

### C. Past/Present/Future

The modal verb “must” can only be used in the present tense (although it can refer to a future action), so to talk about the past and the future, we must use “have to”:

Past	Present	Future
---	<b>must</b>	<b>must</b>
---	I <b>must</b> see a doctor. I'm very sick.	I <b>must</b> see a doctor next week. I'm very sick.
<b>had to</b>	<b>has/have to</b>	<b>will have to</b>
When I was young, I <b>had to</b> see a doctor frequently. I was very sick.	You <b>have to</b> see a doctor. You're very sick. He <b>has to</b> see a doctor. He's very sick.	I <b>will have to</b> see a doctor next week. I'm very sick.

**Exercise 3.** Translate the following sentences:

1. Ontem ele deveria comer somente arroz.

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2. Ela deve comer somente arroz.

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3. Ele deverá comer somente arroz amanhã.

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