



Using Modal Verbs

Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs which cannot usually work alone. They are used with a main verb. These are **modal verbs**:

might

will

may

should

could

would

ought

must

shall

can



Inverting Modal Verbs

Modal verbs make questions by inversion.

She **can** go out.

Can she go out?



We **could** drive there.

Could we drive there?



Children **should** eat fruit.

Should children eat fruit?



Possibility

Modal verbs can be used to show how possible something is, or how likely it is to happen/have happened.

He's very late. He **could have missed** the train.



It's snowing so it must be very cold outside.



They will lock the windows when they go out.



Possibility

Modal verbs can be used to show how possible something is, or how likely it is to happen/have happened.

Mum **might** take us swimming after school.



You **could** eat a banana instead of those sweets.



“Hurry up! We **will** be late!” said Dad.



We **can** go the other way – it’s quicker.



You **ought** to go to bed earlier.



Choose a Modal Verb

Which modal verbs are missing from these sentences?

You **must** be hot in that thick coat.

If it's dry, **shall** we play outside?

He's so fast, he **should** win the race.

I'm fed up with my long hair. I **might** have it cut.

Did you choose these modal verbs?
Which others could you have used?



Other Uses of Modal Verbs

Modal verbs can also be used to show:

advice or obligation

Pupils **must** wear a uniform.

You **should** not smoke.



permission

May I leave a few minutes early?

Could we go to the post box on the way?

Please **can** we have an ice cream?



habits

I **will** often have cereal for my breakfast.

We **shall** always enjoy a walk in the park.



ability

I **can** ride a bike.

My grandfather **could** draw very well.





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