



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

These are **modal verbs**:

**might**

**will**

**should**

**may**

**would**

**can**

**could**

**must**

**shall**

**ought to**

**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?



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

For example:

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



It's snowing, so it **must be** freezing outside.



They **will lock** the doors when they go out.



Can you spot the **modal verbs** used to show **possibility** in these sentences?

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



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



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

Hurry up!

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



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



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 **could** 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?

**Modal verbs** can also be used to show:

### advice or obligation

Students **must** wear a uniform.

You **should** not smoke.



### habits

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

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



### permission

**May** I leave a few minutes early?

**Could** we go to the post office on the way?

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



### ability

I **can** drive a tractor.

My grandfather **could** draw very well.



