



MODAL VERBS - ADVICE, OBLIGATION & POSSIBILITY

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PDF 1 – What Do You Mean?

Modal Verbs: Advice, Obligation & Possibility

Modal verbs help us talk about what people **should do, must do, can do, or might do**.

1. Match the meaning

Read the sentences. Choose the meaning of the modal verb.

A. Advice

B. Strong obligation

C. Possibility

D. Permission / ability

1. You **should** get more sleep. _____
2. You **must** wear a seat belt. _____
3. It **might** rain this afternoon. _____
4. You **can** use my phone. _____
5. You **could** try a different restaurant. _____
6. We **have to** show our passports. _____
7. She **may** be late. _____
8. You **can** leave early today. _____

2. The main ideas

SHOULD / SHOULDN'T Use should to give advice. You should call the doctor. You shouldn't stay up so late.	CAN / CAN'T Use can for ability or permission. You can park here. You can't smoke here.
MUST Use must for a strong obligation or rule. You must wear a helmet.	COULD Use could for a possible idea or suggestion. We could take the bus.
HAVE TO Use have to when something is necessary because of a rule, situation or requirement. I have to work tomorrow.	MAY / MIGHT Use may or might when something is possible. It might rain later. She may be at home.

3. Choose the best answer

1. You have an important exam tomorrow. You ____ study tonight. a) should b) might c) can	4. ____ I use your phone for a minute? a) Must b) Might c) Can
2. Take an umbrella. It ____ rain later. a) must b) might c) should	5. You look tired. You ____ go home and rest. a) should b) mustn't c) may
3. Take an umbrella. It ____ rain later. a) must b) might c) should	6. We don't have any plans tonight. We ____ watch a movie. a) could b) have to c) must

4. Complete the sentences

Use:

should – shouldn't – must – have to – might – can

1. You _____ drink more water.
2. Visitors _____ show their passports.
3. You _____ park in front of this gate. It's not allowed.
4. I _____ work late tonight.
5. We _____ go to the beach tomorrow if the weather is good.
6. You _____ eat so much fast food.

REAL ENGLISH BOX

In everyday English, people often use:

You should... → friendly advice

You could... → a possible idea

You might want to... → a softer suggestion

Compare:

You should call him.

You could call him.

You might want to call him.

All three give advice, but the last two can sound softer and less direct.

Teacher's Key

1.

- 1 A
- 2 B
- 3 C
- 4 D
- 5 A
- 6 B
- 7 C
- 8 D

3.

- 1 a
- 2 b
- 3 b
- 4 c
- 5 a
- 6 a

4.

- 1 should
- 2 must / have to
- 3 mustn't
- 4 have to
- 5 might
- 6 shouldn't