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EMPOWER • ENTHUSE • EXCEL

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What Are Modal Verbs?

Modal verbs are [helping verbs](#) that are used along with [main verbs](#) to represent the ability, possibility and probability of a [subject](#) to do an action and emphasise the necessity of an action.

Examples of Modal Verbs

Let us look at some examples of modal verbs used as [auxiliary verbs](#) and their functions.

Modal Verb	Function
Can	Used to denote the ability of the subject to perform an action or to request permission to perform an action
Could	Used to denote the ability of the subject to perform an action or an offer made by the subject to perform an action
May	Used to denote the probability of an action taking place or to request permission to perform an action
Might	Used to denote the probability of an action taking place or to make suggestions
Will	Used to denote the surety of an action taking place or the assurance of the subject to perform a particular action
Would	Used to show politeness when requesting or asking if an action can be done by the subject.
Shall	Used to denote the surety of an action taking place or the assurance of the subject to perform a particular action
Should	Used to denote the necessity of an action to be done by the subject
Must	Used to denote the strong obligation or necessity for the subject to do or not do an action
Ought to	Used to denote the obligation of the subject to perform a particular action

How to Use Modal Verbs in Sentences

Given below are a few examples of how modal verbs can be used to indicate the possibility or probability of an action taking place.

- It **might** rain in the evening.
- I think they **will** reach Coimbatore by 8 pm.
- **Can** you pick up my brother from school on your way home tomorrow?
- I **could** make some time to help you with your assignments.

- Your friends **may** come to visit you next week.
- It **would** not be possible for you to complete all of it by tomorrow evening.

Here are some examples of modal verbs being used to show the necessity and obligation of the subject to perform a particular set of actions.

- All students of this institution **ought to** abide by the rules and instructions provided.
- All employees **should** follow the dress code strictly.
- You **must** get yourself checked before the situation becomes worse.
- Your sister **will have** to apply for a leave request if she wants to take a month's leave.

Modal verbs can be used to make offers, suggestions and requests. Check out the examples given below for know-how.

- It **would** be better if you did it the other way.
- I **could** help you if you want.
- **Shall** I bring you some water to drink?
- **Could** you please pass me the science record?
- **Will** you please take care of my son for an hour? I have some grocery shopping to be done.

Test Your Knowledge of Modal Verbs

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate modal verb in the following sentences:

1. _____ you be able to bring your camera when you come?
2. Priya _____ apologise for the confusion that was caused yesterday because of her carelessness.
3. You _____ finish this first and then start with the other one.
4. _____ I make some tea for you?
5. I _____ make sure to keep everything ready by the time they reach the railway station.
6. You _____ see to it that the students are standing according to their roll numbers.
7. _____ I come in?
8. She _____ find it interesting as she likes reading adventure stories.
9. Do you have any idea how much all of this _____ cost?
10. _____ you please help me find my keys?

Ready to find out if you used the right modal verbs? Let us check.

1. **Would** you be able to bring your camera when you come?
2. Priya **should/ought to** apologise for the confusion that was caused yesterday because of her carelessness.
3. You **could** finish this first and then start with the other one.
4. **Shall** I make some tea for you?
5. I **will** make sure to keep everything ready by the time they reach the railway station.
6. You **must** see to it that the students are standing according to their roll numbers.
7. **Can/Shall/May** I come in?
8. She **might** find it interesting as she likes reading adventure stories.
9. Do you have any idea how much all of this **would** cost?
10. **Can/Would/Could/Will** you please help me find my keys?

Modals Exercises for Class 10 with Answers

Use appropriate modal verbs to complete the following exercises. Once you are done with them, check your answers to make sure you used the right verbs.

Exercise 1 – Fill in the Blanks

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate form of modals.

1. Rachel _____ have brought the bicycle, but she didn't have enough money. (could/should)
2. This is a hospital, and you _____ not talk loudly here. (must/could)
3. Uma _____ apply for the job she got in London. (might/would)
4. Yusuf _____ speak fluent French when they used to stay in Paris. (must/could)
5. Take the raincoat as it _____ rain later. (might/would)
6. You _____ visit the doctor immediately as your symptoms are quite severe. (must/ can)
7. _____ you give me a bottle of water? My throat is parched. (could/shall)
8. I _____ like to talk about the great freedom fighters on Independence Day. (would/must)
9. One _____ help the old and needy people. (ought to/can)
10. _____ you like some sweets that I made yesterday? (would/can)

Answers for Exercise 1

1. Rachel **could** have brought the bicycle, but she didn't have enough money. (could/should)
2. This is a hospital, and you **must** not talk loudly here. (must/could)
3. Uma **might** apply for the job she got in London. (might/would)
4. Yusuf **could** speak fluent French when they used to stay in Paris. (must/could)
5. Take the raincoat as it **might** rain later. (might/would)
6. You **must** visit the doctor immediately as your symptoms are quite severe. (must/ can)
7. **Could** you give me a bottle of water? My throat is parched. (could/shall)
8. I **would** like to talk about the great freedom fighters on Independence Day. (would/must)
9. One **ought to** help the old and needy people. (ought to/can)
10. **Would** you like some sweets that I made yesterday? (would/can)

Exercise 2 – Fill in the blanks

Read the options and fill in the blanks with appropriate modal verbs.

1. Suman ____ swim. You _____ not allow her to go to the swimming pool.
2. Ira ____ attend the party as she was quite sick.
3. We _____ to save our Earth's resources so that our future generations can use them too.
4. People ____ take care of their parents when they grow old.
5. Tina ____ come to my birthday party this Friday.
6. _____ you like to accompany me on the next trek?
7. Traffic rules _____ be more strict so that people don't break them.
8. Children _____ always listen to their parents.
9. I know you _____ achieve your goals soon. My best wishes are with you.
10. Priti _____ easily win today's match; hadn't she hurt her knees.

1. i) can't, must ii) shouldn't, will iii) will not, can not

2. i) couldn't ii) must not iii) shouldn't

3. i) need ii) ought iii) could

4. i) ought to ii) should iii) might

5. i) will ii) might iii) can

6. i) would ii) should iii) could

7. i) must ii) might iii) need

8. i)should ii)must iii) can

9. i)will ii)might iii)could

10. i)could ii)might iii)must

Answers for Exercise 2

1. Suman **can't** swim. You **must** not allow her to go to the swimming pool.
2. Ira **couldn't** attend the party as she was quite sick.
3. We **ought** to save our Earth's resources so that our future generations can use them too.
4. People **ought to** take care of their parents when they grow old.
5. Tina **will** come to my birthday party this Friday.
6. **Would** you like to accompany me on the next trek?
7. Traffic rules **must** be more strict so that people don't break them.
8. Children **should** always listen to their parents.
9. I know you **will** achieve your goals soon. My best wishes are with you.
10. Priti **could** easily win today's match hadn't she hurt her knees.