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English – I (Basic English)

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Modal Verbs – A Quick Review

Welcome to the class. You might have seen words like can, could, shall, should, right before the English main verbs in sentences, English sentences. While seeking permission, may I come in or while talking about someone's capability, referring to someone's potential and efficacy, you can do this work; I cannot do this work and something of this sort. You might find such words in front of before this English main verbs.

And when these words occur, you might have seen that the main verb remains in its bare infinitive form. So, no change; you do not find any change in the main verb. So, the form of the verb remains the same, but this new category added to it just before it. What is it? So, can, is it a verb, can go, I can run very fast, so run the verb, main verb. And what is this can before run, it explains, it indicates, it expresses my ability to run fast.

But where is the meaning of the verb? So, the verb run remains in its original form. And basically, the meaning is derived out of the verb run. So, the semantic content is located in the main verb run; when I say I can run fast, 'can' somehow express my ability or capacity to run fast.

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Modal Verbs: A Quick Review

- A **modal verb** is a class of verbs that is used to indicate modality that is: likelihood, ability, permission, request, capacity, suggestions, order, obligation, or advice. Modal verbs always accompany the base [infinitive] form of another verb having semantic content. A modal verb gives information about the function of the main verb that it governs. Modals have a wide variety of communicative functions.
- Such as:
can, could, shall, should, may, might, will, would, must, ought to, etc.

So, they are not full verb, like conventionally we know can, run, go eat, drink, play, read, these are verbs, but few words like can, should, may, might, will, shall they are added to, just before these verbs but certainly they are not nouns. So, they are verbs of a different category.

A verb without any semantic content that does not have a meaning, meaning is not encoded in these words, meaning is there with the main verb, but what is the function of these words? What kind of verbs are they? What is the class of these verbs? So today, we are going to talk about model verbs. Or we also know, know it as a model auxiliary verb. So, we are going to talk about modal auxiliary verbs or modal verbs we commonly call it.

A modal verb is a class of verbs that is used to indicate modality that means likelihood, ability, permission, request capacity, suggestions, order, obligation, advice, etc. Modal verbs always accompany the base or the main verb. A modal verb gives information about the function of the main verb that it governs.

And modal verbs have a variety of communicative functions. We will talk about them very quickly. So, some very common modal verbs in English are like, can, could, shall, should, may, might, will, would, must, ought to, etc.

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English Modal Verbs

- Such Modal Verbs in English are *can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, ought to, must, need*. They have some characteristics in common:
- they have no infinitive marker.
- to form the question, you invert the subject and the verb:
Can you play the guitar?
- to form a negative, you add not:
You mustn't (=must not) forget your homework.
- they are followed by the verb without to
- they contract to these forms:
can't, couldn't, shan't, shouldn't, won't, wouldn't, mustn't, needn't. (The other contractions like mightn't or oughtn't to are rare.) We do not contract may not.

What did they do in a sentence? What is the function of such, such modal verbs in a sentence? So, they are; they are there to express or indicate the modality of the verb. And such modal verbs

in English are like can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, ought to, must need, etc. And they have certain similar characteristics, very common characteristics.

For example, they have no infinitive marker. So, the verb comes in its bare form, in its original form, without 'to' added to it. Infinitives you know, to go, to eat, to drink, we call them infinitives because to prefixed with them, or to precedes them. But in such cases where these modal verbs occur, we do not use to. So, the verb occurs without 'to' as an infinitive marker. That is one commonality across all modal verbs and categories.

When you want to form a question, they are inverted, or they are fronted. So, something like can you play the guitar? So, you play the guitar; I play piano. I know how to play piano, I play piano. I can play piano. So, I can play piano. If I want to make a question out of it, what I will do, I have to invert this modal verb can in front of the sentence, and it is very easy, can I play piano?

So, may I come, may is inverted and fronted to form a question. Other commonality about these modal verbs is that all of them take negative marker onto them. Like, cannot, will not, shall not, should not. So, there be a negative marker. And then, then contracted forms we use like, can't, could not, shan't, shall not, shan't, shouldn't, won't, will not, wouldn't, mustn't, needn't. So this is the contracted form we use in oral speech.

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The slide has a dark blue header bar with the text 'IIT Madras ONLINE DEGREE' and the IIT Madras logo. Below the header, the title 'Shall/shan't' is displayed in a large, bold, light blue font. To the left of the title is a large grey arrow pointing right. The main content area has a light blue background with white text. It lists several uses of 'Shall/shan't' as modal verbs:

- Shall/shan't are modal verbs and are only used with I and we. They can be used in a lot of different ways. The most important are:
 - to make and ask for suggestions:
Shall we go and see a film? (=Let's go and see a film.)
What shall we say to him?
 - to offer to do something:
Shall I do the washing up?
 - to ask somebody what they want you to do:
Where shall I put your bag?
- Note: In spoken English, I will, I shall, we will, we shall, he will, they will etc. are usually contracted to I'll, we'll, he'll, they'll, etc.

On the right side of the slide, there is a video player showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a white shirt, speaking. He is gesturing with his hands while talking. The video player has a dark blue border.

So, we will go through all these modal verbs one after the other; let us start with shall. Shall is a very productive and interesting modal verb because if you recall, in the future tense, in future tense constructions in English, we used two modal categories, two modal verbs, will and shall because English verbs are not conjugated or inflected for future tense. Like you have in the present tense, I go, in the past tense, I went, but in the future tense, I shall go, or I will go.

So go remains, like present I go, but this will or shall are added to these verbs to make or derive future references. So, we will start with shall or in the contracted form we call shan't if you add negative to it. So, this is used to make and ask suggestions like, shall we go and see a film? It is equivalent to let us go and say, well, so proposal, a suggestion. What shall we say to him, seeking opinion

It is also used to offer to do something, something like shall I do the washing up. It is also used to ask somebody what they want you to do, like, where shall I put your bag? The use of shall in common speech nowadays is not in trend with even with the first person we tend to use will more often than shall.

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Might

- Might + verb
- This is used to talk about a future action which we are not sure about:
It might rain. (= If it is possible that it will rain.)
I might go.

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Another model verb like might it is an almost past equivalent of may, intense harmony may in a clause followed by this matrix clause, with the metric clause is passed then we have may converted into might in the subordinate clauses. But might plus a verb is used to talk about a

future action, which we are not sure about. So, guesswork, guess, or when you are not certain. So, we say it might rain today. So, we are not certain; it may be possible, it may not rain. But where you say it might rain today, we are expressing some anticipation, apprehension, or a guesswork, I might go, but I am not sure about it. So, this is how we use might, in such cases.

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Can

Can is used:

- To talk about ability:
He can swim.
He can't play tennis.
- To request something:
Can I speak to Mark, please?
Can you repeat that?
Can I smoke?
- In the negative we use can't to say something is logically impossible:
It can't be true.
He can't be married-he lives on his own.

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Modal verb like can, which is used to talk about the ability, the capacity, efficacy of a person, or thing, like he can swim. So, can denotes the capacity or ability of a person of swimming, he can't play tennis, it also expresses with negative of course added to it, the inability of the person of playing tennis. We use can to request something like, can I speak to Mark, please?

You might be familiar in a polite sense we use, with a polite frame framework we use, may I speak to Mark, then you do not have to have please added to it. But if you say can I make, can I speak to mark, then we have to have a polite marker, please, if you are polite? Or if you are not polite or deliberately you do not want to be polite, you can simply say, can I, can I talk to Mark?

Can you repeat that? Can I smoke, or you can in that sense, you cannot in if you are not permitted. So, just taking permission, or you are requesting for something. In the negative, we use can't to say something is logically impossible, something that can't be true.

Can plus negative a contracted form can't or you can say you can, it cannot be true in writing, you can use the full form. But usually, when we speak, we use contracted forms to make it quick

and easy to pronounce. So, I can't use this; you can't use this, it cannot be true, it can't be true. He can't be married. He lives on his own. So, such kind of things, when we try to show something which is logically impossible. So, we use the contracted form of can plus not, can't.

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Could

Could is used

- to talk about ability in the past:
I could swim when I was six.
- to make suggestions:
We could go to the beach.
- to ask somebody to do something:
Could you tell me the time?
- to ask for permission:
Could I leave the room?
- to talk about a possibility in the present:
He could be French.

Moving on, could another modal verb which is used to talk about ability in the past. I just told you that can and could, will and would, shall and should, may and might; these pairs the second part or the second word in the each of these pairs denotes something in the past; this is one indication. So, could is also used to express or indicate the ability or capacity but reference point is past.

So, I could swim when I was six; possibly, I cannot seem now. But it refers to my ability in the past to do so. To make some suggestions that and if you are not very assertive, so we could go to the beach. To ask somebody to do something in a very polite way to underline the politeness sometimes we use could instead of can.

So, could you tell me the time, please? Or could you tell me the time? You can also say can you tell me the time, but in order to underline the politeness, effectively and assertively we use could here. Could you tell me the time? Then to ask for permission, could I leave the room? Could I finish my work? So, such kind of things.

It is also used to talk about a possibility in the present. So, something like you when you make a guess, and you are not sure about it. Like he could be French. So, if I am guessing about someone, some individual and you are not sure who he is or she is, she could be French, it could be x, it could be y. So, in such cases, where you are trying to be, trying to predict the possibilities, we use this word could, the modal verb could.

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May

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May is used

- to ask for permission formally:
May I talk to you a second?
- to talk about things in the future which are not certain:
The weather may be lovely tomorrow.
- Might is used to talk about actions in the future which are not certain:
There might be an earthquake at any time.

Then another model word 'May', it is used to ask for permission formally; it is a very formal way of asking permission. So, may I talk to you for a second, a very formal, polite way of asking permission to talk to somebody, seeking permission to talk. So, 'may' functions there as a modal verb to indicate politeness and degree of formality.

It is also used to talk about things in the future which are not certain. So, when you are not certain apprehensions, guesswork, we use 'may' the modal verbs. Something like the weather may be lovely tomorrow, it may be bad today, but it will be lovely or pleasant tomorrow. So, the weather may be pleasant tomorrow. It is a guesswork, it is, it is you are anticipating.

The train might, the train might be delayed, or the train may be delayed. In other cases, may or might, we are anticipating the delay. Might is also used to talk about actions in future which are not certain of course, when you are guessing, when you are anticipating, when apprehending things, we use may or might interchangeably, like there might be an earthquake at any time, or

there may be an earthquake at any time, it is just a guesswork anticipated outcome of certain things. This is how we use 'may' in a sentence to indicate such meanings.

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Shall

Shall is used

- to make and ask for suggestions:
Shall we go and see a film? (= Let's go and see a film.)
What shall we say to him?
- to offer to do something:
Shall I do the washing up?
- to ask somebody what they want you to do:
Where shall I put your bag?

Shall as we already talked about, to make and ask suggestions, to offer, to do something or to ask somebody what they want to do. We use shall, shall is also used as a modal verb to denote future act, the future course of action in English. We shall overcome; you might have heard this famous song We Shall Overcome, shall. It is used with first-person singular or plural, both kinds of prominence, and it denotes future in English.

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Should

Should is used:

- to ask for and give advice:
A: What should you do if you get sunburn?
B: You should put cream on your skin.
- to make suggestions:
I think we should go home.

Should, is used to ask and give advice, usually, it is we use should to denote the advice or any kind of expected action on the part of this speaker. So, it is almost like didactic in nature sometimes; it may be instructive at times. So, something like you should come on time, it can be a suggestion, or it can be an advice. It can be sometimes, depending on the tone, how you speak it, it can be an order. So, it has a very wide range of shades of meaning.

So, you should advise or sometimes orders as well depending on the location and identity of the speaker, but usually, it is advise that we use it for, to make suggestions at times, you should take medicine on time. It may be advise, if it is told by a doctor, it may be an order if told with added accent to it, added emphasis to it. Or it can be simply a suggestion whether you like it or not whether you follow it or not. So, you should take medicine on time. I think we should go home, such kind of things.

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Will

Will is used:

- for talking about the future.
- to make offers:
I'll do it for you.
- to make promises.
I'll do it as soon as I can.
- Would is used to make conditional sentences in the phrase:
Would you like ...?

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सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा

[Video feed of a man speaking]

Then will, again for talking about future like shall. It is used with second person and third person prominence. To make offers, I will do it for you, to make permissions and promises, to make promises, I will do it as soon as I can or would is also used to make conditional sentences in the phrase would you like, and then we continue.

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Ought to

- Ought to this is used in the same way as should (see above). In the negative, you usually say shouldn't, not oughtn't to.
- Need: This is usually a 'normal' verb, which forms its negatives and questions in the usual way:
Do you need anything?
I don't need to do anything.
But the negative form needn't is very common:
We needn't go immediately.

Another very special modal category ought to; it mandates the suggestion. So, it is almost like, somehow something like, descriptive in nature and prescriptive in nature, you prescribe and in such prescribed, prescribing contexts, we use ought to instead of should, they both mean almost the same, the only thing is that ought to is prescriptive in nature.

So, usually, we use should, but when you say you ought to obey the law, you can also say you should obey the law, but when you make it mandatory and make it prescriptive, you say you should. When you say, in normal suggestion or normal advice or normal context, you say, you should obey the law, but when you want to underline the prescriptive nature of it, that somebody must follow the law, we say we ought to, we ought to follow the law.

And here ought to is a single phrase. So, do not confuse this to with infinitive marker. You cannot say you should to go, you should go. So, this is also a modal category, but the to is not attached to the verb, the verb remains in this bare infinitive form, ought to is a single unit, we have to keep in mind.

Need is another word, we use it as auxiliary or modal verb category, usually, it is a normal verb, but it is also used as a modal verb like, do you need anything in that case or I do not need to do anything, but the negative form needn't is very common. So, need is another special category we should keep in mind.

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Must

Must is used:

- to express an obligation or give an order:
You must go to bed early.
You must stop doing that.
We must be more careful in future.
- to give advice:
If you go to Britain, you must try fish and chips.

Mustn't is used

- to express a prohibition:
You mustn't go swimming after lunch.

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A video feed of a professor is visible in the bottom right corner.

Must, it indicates something mandatory or certainty; degree of certainty is higher when we use must in a sentence. So, must is used to express an obligation or give an order, she must go to bed early, you must stop doing that, we must be more careful in future, so such kind of contexts in which we use must. It also used to give advice but in a very strong way, almost like making it mandatory. So, we say, if you go to Britain, you must try fish and chips.

Or you must try this. So, you are adding a degree of emphasis; you are emphasizing, making it almost mandatory. So, it is advise, but the way you are saying it, so must is used in certain cases where you emphasize the meaning of it, meaning of the verb or you want to make it mandatory, so must, certainty, degree of certainty is added more to this word. And we have contracted for mustn't to express prohibition and that to a mandatory prohibition, you mustn't go swimming after lunch, such cases.

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Have to

- Have to is used in place of must to express an obligation:
New students have to/must register on their first day.
- It is also used in the past or future because must is not possible:
We all had to give in our names.
You will have to be brave.
- Have (got) to:
- This is used in the same way as have to. The negative is haven't got to and the question form is
Have you got to...?
I've got to go to the bank.
We haven't got to be there until 12 o'clock.
Have you got to change money?

Now, there are other phrases and chunk of words, which, which act as modal verbs like have to, have got to, you can see these examples. New students have to or must register on the first day, something like we all had to give in our names, you will have to be brave something like that, how got to, have you got to xyz you can say anything, I have got to do, I have got to go to the bank, we have not got to be there until 12 o'clock. So, these are stylistic variations, and these are very important phrase use as modal verb.

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- This form is more colloquial than have to and is commonly used when the obligation is at the moment of speaking.
 - Don't/doesn't have to
- This is used to show that something is not necessary or not obligatory:
British men don't have to do military service.
 - Must or have to?
- Generally speaking, these two forms have a similar meaning, but are used in different ways. Must is used when the person who is speaking is making the obligation:
'You must do your homework' said the teacher. (It is the teacher who says so.)
- Have to is used when an organization like a school or a government imposes the obligation:
You have to have a visa to visit the USA.
In that school they have to do a lot of homework.

And similarly, don't have to, doesn't have to, must or have to. So, have to make this mandatory, obligation; it underlines obligation, the kind of pressure or certainty that you are required to do it, whether you like it or not. So, against your will your wishes, you have to do it. Something like British men do not have to do military services. In India, we do not have to do military services mandatorily.

You must do your homework. So, generally speaking, these two forms have a similar meaning and but are used in different ways, 'must' is used when a person who is speaking is making the obligation, have to is used when an organization like a school or a government imposes an obligation. So, these are certain variations, while we use must and have to.

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Mustn't or don't/doesn't have to?

- These two forms mean different things. Mustn't shows an obligation, but an obligation not to do something. It is like can't:
You mustn't smoke in here. (= You can't smoke in here.)
- Don't have to is used when there is no obligation at all – you can do what you like. It is like needn't or don't need to:
You don't have to come. (= You don't need to come.)

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संविति कर्ता

The contracted form mustn't, don't, doesn't have to, with negative.

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Useful phrases which are like modal verbs

Be able to:

- This is used in the same way as can but only in the sense of ability:
- He is able to walk now.

Be allowed to :

- This is used in place of can or could to talk about permission:

Are we allowed to smoke?
We weren't allowed to go out after nine at night.

Some other useful phrases which behave like modal verbs are phrases like 'be able to'. So, look at the sentence. He is able to walk now, be means; word be is, am, are. He is able to walk now. I am not able to catch up with you today. So, be able to. Be allowed to; this is used to place in place of can or could to talk about permission like, are we allowed to bunk the classes. Or we were not allowed to go out after nine at night. So, this is how we use them interchangeably.

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• सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा •

Used to + verb:

- This is used to talk about states, situations or repeated actions (habits and routines) that you did in the **past** but don't do now:
- Repeated actions:
She used to play tennis every week, but now she plays football.
- States:
I used to be very fat, but I've lost a lot of weight.
- Situations:
I used to live in Brazil.
- You cannot use this form in present.
- NB: Don't confuse this verb with the adjective used to + noun/... ing which means 'accustomed to' or 'familiar with'.

Used to plus verb, another phrase which acts as a modal category used to, like ought to we had used to. It is used for denoting repeated action estates or situations. For example, she used to play tennis every week, but now she plays football. So, it refers to a past event, which is a repeated event or habitual event. States like I used to be very fat, but I have lost a lot of weight. Though it is true now but just hypothetical I used to be very fat, but I have lost a lot of weight, that shows the state in the past.

Situations like, I used to live in America, I used to live in England, I used to live in Chennai, I used to live in Delhi. So, but this form is not used in any case, in any circumstance sorry present; it is used only for past that we have to keep in mind.

So, that's all about modal verbs; we have to keep in mind that they are not full verbs like run, go eat, drink, play. But they have a sense of modality, a meaning of modality attached to them, and when they are used with the main verb, the verb comes in its bare infinitive form. So modal verb, plus verb in the bare infinitive form means without to.

And the semantic content, the meaning part is associated with the main verb and the modality part is associated with these modal verbs. So, can go, will go, shall go, must go, may go. So, go contains the actual meaning semantic part, may, can, should, shall will they refer to modality. So, this is all about modal verbs in English, and we will continue practising and discussion. So, this is for now. Thank you.