

To talk about rules, we use the verbs *must*, *have to* and *can*.

- To say that something is obligatory, we use *must* or *have to*.
*You **have to** train hard to do a Marathon.*
*Runners **must** arrive twenty minutes before the race.*
- To say that something is allowed, we use *can*.
*Members **can** use the swimming pool for free.*
- To say that something is not obligatory but allowed, we use *don't have to*.
*You **don't have to** be fit to join the club.*
- To say that something is not allowed, we use *can't* or *mustn't*.
*You **can't** touch the ball in football.*
*You **mustn't** leave any bags in this area.*

MUST VS HAVE TO

In statements about obligation with *must*, the obligation most often comes from the speaker. To talk about something that comes from the outside (for instance a regulation or an order from somebody else) we usually prefer *have to*.

- ❖ I must do some work; I really want to pass my exam.
- ❖ In my job I have to work from 9am to 5pm
- ❖ We really must go home.
- ❖ We've got to go home because of the baby-sitter. (get to go ➡ obligation)

But remember that *mustn't* and *don't have to* have completely different meanings – *mustn't* means 'don't do it!', while *don't have to* means 'it's not necessary to do it'.