

HELP box

Modal verbs

We use modal verbs to add extra meaning to the main verb. They are followed by infinitive without *to*. Modal verbs are used in the following ways:

- To express a possibility

You **can/could** use Adobe Flash to include interactive animations.

You **may** like to insert songs, podcasts, etc.

The price of Dreamweaver **might** go down next month.

Can and **could** are often interchangeable when talking about possibility. **May** and **might** are used to express weaker possibilities and often come before the verb **like** to mean *It is possible you will like*.

- To ask for permission

Can/Could/May I use your mobile phone?

May is more formal than **can** or **could**.

- To talk about ability

*They are looking for artists who **can** draw and design web pages.*

Could is the past tense of **can** and is used to talk about ability in the past.

- To talk about obligation or necessity

*To see or hear all these files, you **must** have the right plug-in.*

*... you **needn't** learn HTML in order to build your own website.*

Needn't means *don't need to* or *don't have to* and is used to express a lack of obligation.

- To give advice (see Unit 7)

*Before going live, you **should** check that all the links work.*

B Complete these sentences with suitable modal verbs from the HELP box. There may be more than one possible answer.

- 1 With Java, I _____ include some attractive banners on my website.
- 2 With a web editor, you _____ create a web document easily.
- 3 These days, you _____ learn how to use complicated HTML codes. Modern web design software is user-friendly and converts a visual layout into HTML code.
- 4 Once live, you _____ update your website regularly.
- 5 To view a PDF file, you _____ have Adobe Acrobat Reader.
- 6 Websites with graphics are more inviting than those written in plain text, so you _____ like to insert some graphics into your documents.
- 7 _____ I use your laptop? I need to print out this report.