

1 modais

Características

São três as principais características dos modais:
não têm infinitivo, gerúndio ou acréscimo de sufixos.
– **Não** existe *to can*, *to may* etc.
– **Não** existe *caning*, *musted*, *mays* etc.
Não recebem o “s” das 3^{as} pessoas do singular no presente.
He **can** stay here.
She **may** leave now.
Não são seguidos por “to + infinitivo”
I can do it. (correto)
I can **to do** it. (errado)
She must study harder. (correto)
She must **to study** harder. (errado)

Figure 1: características dos modais

1.1 can could

can = simple present

could = simple past

Habilidade/Capacidade

Almost everybody can ride a bicycle.

Carl Lewis could run faster than anyone else.

I can't speak Russian.

Possibilidade

We can get to Joe's place in less than 10 minutes.

Thousands of jobs could be lost.

Percepção

Com verbos como *see*, *hear*, *smell*.

I can see some people out there.

I can smell gas.

I can hear a phone ringing.

Permissão (informal)

Can I borrow your pen?

You could stay around, if you wanted to.

Figure 2: aplicações

1.2 may might

may = simple present

might = simple past

can + infinitive (can do / can play / can come etc.):

I/we/you/they he/she/it	can can't (cannot)	do play see come etc.	can	I/we/you/they he/she/it	do? play? see? come? etc.
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I can do something = I know *how* to do it, or it is *possible* for me to do it:

- ☐ I **can play** the piano. My brother **can play** the piano too.
- ☐ Sarah **can speak** Italian, but she **can't speak** Spanish.
- ☐ A: **Can** you swim?
B: Yes, but I'm not a very good swimmer.
- ☐ A: **Can** you **change** twenty pounds?
B: I'm sorry, I **can't**.
- ☐ I'm having a party next week, but Paul and Rachel **can't come**.

For the past (yesterday / last week etc.), we use **could/couldn't**:

- ☐ When I was young, I **could run** very fast.
- ☐ Before Maria came to Britain, she **couldn't understand** much English. Now she **can understand** everything.
- ☐ I was tired last night, but I **couldn't sleep**.
- ☐ I had a party last week, but Paul and Rachel **couldn't come**.

Can you ... ? Could you ... ? Can I ... ? Could I ... ?

We use **Can you ... ?** or **Could you ... ?** when we ask people to do things:

- ☐ **Can you** open the door, please? or **Could you** open the door, please?
- ☐ **Can you** wait a moment, please? or **Could you** wait ... ?

We use **Can I have ... ?** or **Can I get ... ?** to ask for something:

- ☐ **Can I have** a glass of water, please? or **Can I get** ... ?

Can I ... ? or **Could I ... ?** = is it OK to do something?:

- ☐ **Can I** sit here?
- ☐ Tom, **could I** borrow your umbrella?

Figure 3:

might + *infinitive* (**might go** / **might be** / **might rain** etc.):

I/we/you/they he/she/it	might (not)	be go play come etc.
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I might = it is possible that I will:

- ☐ I **might go** to the cinema this evening, but I'm not sure. (= it is possible that I will go)
- ☐ A: When is Rebecca going to phone you?
B: I don't know. She **might phone** this afternoon.
- ☐ Take an umbrella with you. It **might rain**.
- ☐ Buy a lottery ticket. You **might be** lucky. (= perhaps you will be lucky)
- ☐ A: Are you going out tonight?
B: **I might**. (= I might go out)

Study the difference:

- ☐ I'm **playing** tennis tomorrow. (*sure*)
I **might play** tennis tomorrow. (*possible*)
- ☐ Rebecca **is going to phone** later. (*sure*)
Rebecca **might phone** later. (*possible*)

I might not = it is possible that I will not:

- ☐ I **might not go** to work tomorrow.
(= it is possible that I will not go)
- ☐ Sue **might not come** to the party.
(= it is possible that she will not come)

may

You can use **may** in the same way. **I may** = **I might**:

- ☐ I **may go** to the cinema this evening. (= I might go)
- ☐ Sue **may not come** to the party. (= Sue might not come)

May I ... ? = Is it OK to ... ? / Can I ... ?:

- ☐ **May I** ask a question? (= is it OK to ask / can I ask?)
- ☐ '**May I** sit here?' 'Yes, of course.'

Figure 4: