



Modal Verbs

“Must” and “Should”

Grammar > Intermediate 5



Exercise 1 – Learning

Modal verbs in this lesson: **must**, **should**

Must

The modal verb '**must**' says that something is very likely (highly possible) or to say that it is required (obligation).

- He **must** be upset. (= He is most likely upset.)
- You **must** go home soon. (= Go home!)

Add '**not**' after '**must**' to make negative sentences.

- He **must** not be hungry. (= He is probably full.)
- You **must** not go home soon. (= Do not go home!)



Should

The modal verb '**should**' describes an expectation, a suggestion (advice) or obligation.

- According to the weather forecast, it **should** rain tomorrow. (= it will probably rain.)
- You **should** go home soon. (= I suggest going home)

Add '**not**' after '**should**' to make the negative sentences.

- According to the weather forecast, it **should not** rain tomorrow. (= it probably won't rain.)
- You **should not** go home soon. (= I suggest not going home)

The difference between the '**should**' obligation and '**must**' obligation is that '**must**' is stronger.

"You **must** go home" is closer to the imperative "Go home!".

"You **should** go home" is closer to a suggestion: "I suggest going home".



Questions

In modern English, questions with '**must**' are not very common, so this section will focus on questions using '**should**'.

We can use '**should**' to ask questions about things we are expected or obligated to do. As with other modal verbs, move the modal verb to the beginning:

- I should arrive by 10 am. → **Should** I arrive by 10 am?
- He should see a doctor. → **Should** he see a doctor?

To ask an open-ended question, add a question word to the beginning:

- When **should** I arrive?
- What **should** he do?



Exercise 2 – Ordering

Put the words into the correct order.

Example: You play shouldn't with fire. → You shouldn't play with fire.

Content:

1. that should I do How?
2. answer You must all questions the.
3. apologize Should I to him?
4. No, not you should do that.
5. we Must obey the law?
6. Should call I Mike?
7. You tired be must.
8. You not must go soon home.



Exercise 3 – Sentence Construction

Use what you learned in class to create sentences with your tutor.

Example: tell the truth. → You should/must tell the truth.

Content:

1. tidy up your room.
2. wash the dishes.
3. get up now.
4. be late.
5. wear a jacket.
6. eat breakfast.