Lingoda

COMMUNICATION

Advanced modal expressions

LEVEL
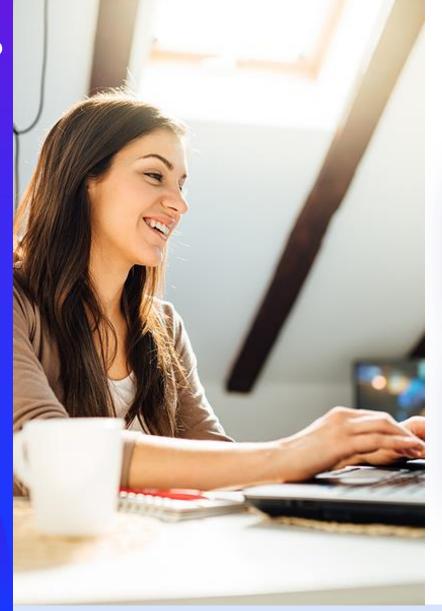Upper-Intermediate (B2)

NUMBER
EN_B2_2084X

LANGUAGE
English

Learning outcomes

- I can use a range of more advanced modal expressions with 'be' to express obligation, such as 'be meant to' and 'be supposed to'.

- I can express degrees of certainty about the future using 'be likely to' and 'more or less likely to'.
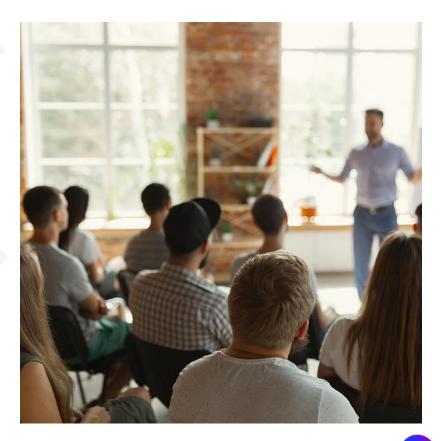
Warm up

1. In breakout rooms or together as a class, **ask** and **answer** the questions below.
2. Then **share one** of your partner's answers with the rest of the class.

What do you **have to** do every morning?

What **should you do** when you have a toothache?

When **mustn't** you speak too loudly?

What **don't you have to do** on Fridays?

Be meant to and be supposed to

Review the information below.

Be meant to means that something **should happen** or is **expected to happen** in the present tense with **be**. It expresses **external obligations.**

- You **are meant to** call your mum before you leave.

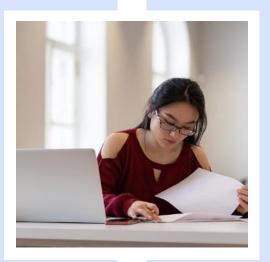- It **is meant to** be a Victoria sponge cake, but I forgot to add the sugar!

It can be used with the past tense of the verb **be**, meaning that something should have happened, but didn't.

- We **were meant to** go on holiday today, but our son is ill.

Meant to can also be used without **be**. In this case, it becomes an internal obligation, something that you wanted to do but didn't.
- I **meant to** call, but I forgot!

Be supposed to also means that something **should happen** or is **expected to happen** in the present tense with **be**. It expresses **external obligations.**

- I **am supposed to** finish my homework before I go out.

- She **is supposed to** eat her dinner before she has ice cream.

It can also be used with the past tense of the verb **be**, meaning that something should have happened, but didn't.

- The concert **was supposed to** start at 7pm—why the delay?

- You **were supposed to** clean the kitchen before the guests arrived!

Practise using *be meant to* and *be supposed to*

1. **Read** the scenarios. 2. **Respond** using *be meant to* or *be supposed to*.

1 It is 2:30 pm and Claire has not yet arrived. Your meeting was scheduled for 2:00 pm. (*be supposed to*)

> *I don't know where Claire is—we were supposed to have a meeting at 2 pm.*

2 While you are at work, you plan on calling your sister. That evening, you forget to call her. (*be supposed to*)

>

3 The company's summer party is going to be held outside. It starts to rain. The party is postponed. (*be meant to*)

>

4 You are going away on holiday. You ask Sara to water your plants. On the plane, you realise you didn't give her the keys. (*be supposed to*)

>

5 It is 11:50 pm. You remember it's your best friend's birthday. In a panic, you call him. What do you say? (*be meant to*)

>

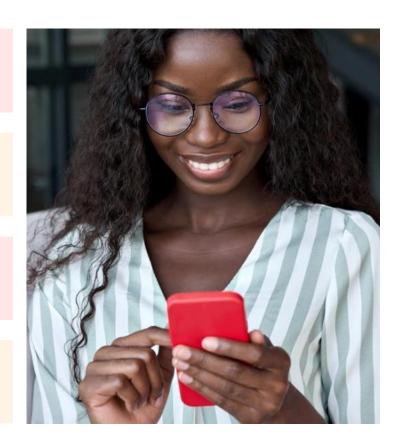**6** It's raining outside. The weather forecast yesterday showed sunshine. (*be supposed to*)

>

Complete the sentences

Complete the sentences with your own ideas.

1 The weather today is supposed to be...

2 I was meant to go _____, but...

3 I am supposed to _____ before/after...

4 My alarm was meant to go off at _____, but...

Ex. *I was meant to go to the hairdresser, but my car broke down!*

Ex. *I am supposed to stretch after running, but I always forget!*

Discuss

Answer the questions below.

When was the last time you were meant to do something and completely forgot?

What did you do to make up for your forgetfulness?

After our fight, we made up with each other and are best friends again.

If you **make up** with someone, you forgive them after an argument and are friendly with them again.

Be likely/unlikely to

- If something **is likely to** happen, you think it **will probably happen**.
- **Unlikely to** means something **probably won't happen**.
  - We can use **unlikely to** or **not likely to**.

positive	negative
He **is likely to win.**	He**'s unlikely to win.**
They**'re likely to** be late—they often are.	They**'re not likely to** be late—they almost never are.
It **is likely to** rain.	It**'s unlikely** that it will be hot and sunny.
We **are likely to** be a bit late. Sorry!	It**'s not likely** they'll be early.

Comparisons using *be likely to*

1. **Read** the sentences. 2. Then **review** the information in the blue box below.

Young people are more likely to rent than own a home.

It is less likely to rain in Spain in summer than in the UK.

- We can use **be likely to** when making a **comparison** based on **probability**.

- We often use the words **more** or **less**.

In 20 years...

1. **Think** about the world in **20 years**.
2. **Categorise** the events.
3. **Explain** your reasoning.

1
there will be sentient machines

2
you will be fluent in English

3
people will begin to move to Mars

4
there will be a lot of flooding

5
mobile phones will be implanted into our heads

6
cryptocurrency will overtake traditional banks

7
cars will be self-driving

8
humans will live longer

likely

unlikely

Discuss

Answer the questions below.

Do you think it is more likely or less likely that...

...online language learning will grow in the next 5 years? Why?

...you will experience warmer winters where you live in the next decade? Why?

...you will move to a new city in the next 2-4 years? Why?

In the next 5 years...

1. **Answer** the questions below.
2. **Use** the phrases from the class.

What is supposed to happen?

What is likely/unlikely to happen?

What may/might/could happen?

What should/shouldn't happen?

Let's reflect

- Can you use a range of more advanced modal expressions with 'be' to express obligation, such as 'be meant to' and 'be supposed to'?

- Can you express degrees of certainty about the future using 'be likely to' and 'more or less likely to'?

Your teacher will now make one suggestion for improvement for each student.

End of the lesson

Idiom

(that's a) likely story

Meaning: used to show disbelief at an excuse or explanation

Example: The dog ate your homework, again? That's a likely story.

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Additional practice

Review: *modals of obligation*

Review the information below.

- Below is a **review** of the most common **modals of obligation**.

modal	meaning	example
must/have to	**obligation**	You **must have** a passport to travel to the USA.
don't have to/don't need to	**no obligation**	You **don't have to** wear a tie to work.
mustn't	**negative obligation**	You **mustn't** smoke indoors.
should/ought to	**advice/no obligation**	You **should go** to the doctor if you feel ill.

Modals for degrees of certainty

Review the main modal verbs used to **express certainty** below.

- **Must** is used when we are certain.
- **May/might/could** are used when we are not sure.
- **Can't** is used when we are sure something is not true.

modal	example
must	That **must** be your mum; she always calls at this time.
might/may/could	That **might** be my sister; she sometimes calls on Sundays.
can't	That **can't** be my mum calling; she's on a flight to Hawaii right now.

Complete the sentences

Complete the sentence with one of the **modals** from the previous slides. *More than one answer is possible.*

1 It_____ be really difficult to make sushi properly—the chefs train for years.

2 You _____ show your passport when crossing the border.

3 People _____ smoke on aeroplanes.

4 They _____ be here already. They're 20 minutes early!

5 That _____ be my neighbour knocking at the door, asking us to turn down the music.

Answer key

P.5:

2.) I was supposed to call my sister, but I forgot.

3.) The party was meant to happen, but it was postponed.

4.) I was supposed to give Sara the keys, but I forgot.

5.) I meant to call earlier. Sorry!

6.) It was supposed to be sunny.

P.19: 1.) must, has to 2.) must/have to 3.) can't/mustn't 4.) can't 5.) might/may/could

Summary

Be meant to
- Expresses something **should** or is **expected to happen** in the present tense with *be*. It expresses **external obligations**, e.g. *I am meant to be home by 10.*
- It can be used with the past tense of the verb *be*, meaning that something should have happened, but didn't, e.g. *We were meant to go on holiday today, but our son is ill.*

More uses of *meant to*
- It can also be used without *be*, becoming an internal obligation, something that you wanted to do but didn't.
- *I meant to call, but I forgot!*

Be supposed to
- *Be supposed to* means that something **should** or is **expected to happen** in the present tense with *be*. It expresses **external obligations**, e.g. *I am supposed to finish my homework before I go out.*
- It can also be used with the past tense of the verb *be*, meaning that something should have happened, but didn't, e.g. *I was supposed to finish this report today.*

Be likely/unlikely to
- If something *is likely to* happen, you think it **will probably happen**, e.g. *He's likely to win.*
- *Unlikely to* means something **probably won't happen**. We can use *unlikely to* or *not likely to*, e.g. *They're not likely to be early.*

Vocabulary

to be meant to

to be supposed to

to make up

to be likely to

to be unlikely to

Notes