

# Modal verbs of obligation

GRAMMAR

LEVEL  
Intermediate

NUMBER  
EN\_BE\_2417G

LANGUAGE  
English





## Goals

- Can correctly use 'must' and 'mustn't'.
- Can correctly structure short sentences with modal verbs of obligation.

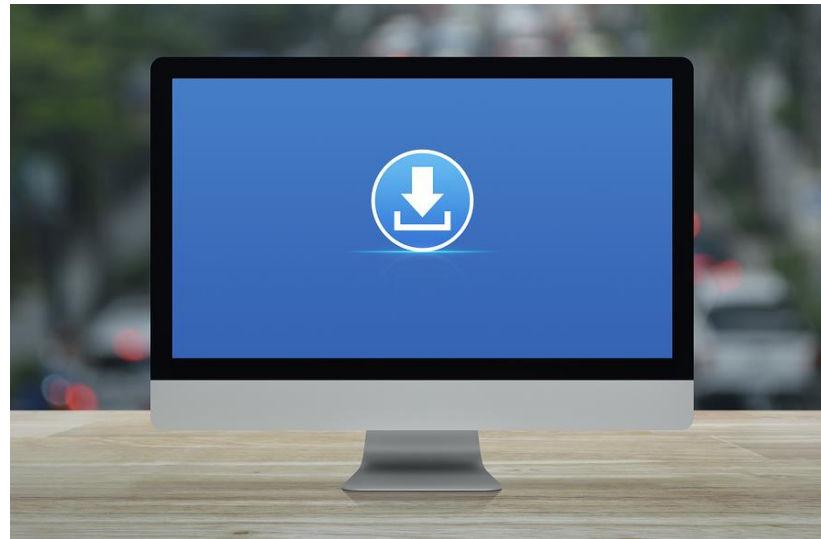






## Preview and warm-up

In this lesson, you will learn about **modal verbs** of **obligation**.



You **must** download the latest version of the report!



## *Must*

- We can use **must** to express obligation.
- Obligation is when it is **necessary** to do something
- We use this structure: **subject + must + infinitive** (without *to*)



I **must** finish the project on time.



## *Must*

- **Must** is often seen in **written orders** as well as in **instructions**.
- Look at the example:



You **must** wear gloves to do this job.



## *Have to*

- **Have to** also expresses that something is **necessary**.
- We use the structure: **subject + have** (in the present) + **to + infinitive** (without to)



He **has to** leave now or he will miss his flight.



## Comparing *must* and *have to*

- *Must* and *have to* are very similar in meaning, with only a small difference:
- *Must* sounds like something is **personally important** to the speaker
- *Have to* refers more to the **situation** making something necessary

I **have to** send the document in PDF format.

Sorry darling, but I **must** finish this email.



- In the first example, the rule is PDF format only.
- In the second example, the mother thinks it is important to finish her message.





## Look at these examples

Notice the small differences in meaning between these sentences:



You **must** let me work!

I **have to** work on the project.



He **has to** finish the accounts today.

I **must do** the accounts correctly.





## Form sentences with *must* and *have to*

1. Must/day/shopping/you/go/every



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2. We/outside/have/to/smoke



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3. They/do/do/homework/their/have/  
to/today/?



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4. Must/tell/him/I/truth/the



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5. You/must/there/why/go/?



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## Discuss

What is something  
you have to do every  
day?

What is something  
your boss must do in  
their job?

What must you do to  
stay healthy?

What is something  
you have to see once  
in your life?



## Look at the picture



Imagine you are in charge of a work event on this boat.

Tell the passengers what they *must* and *have to* do onboard.



## *Not have to*

- In the negative form ***not have to*** means it is **not necessary** to do something.
- There is **no obligation**, there is a choice.
- Look at the example below:

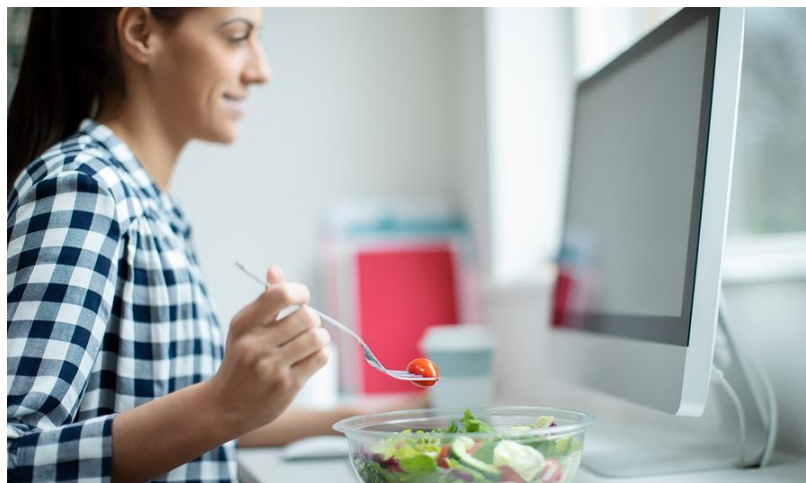


She **doesn't have to** work in the car, but she likes to!



## *Mustn't*

- In the negative form ***mustn't*** means it is **not allowed** to do something.
- Look at the example sentence below:



You **mustn't** eat at your desk, it's forbidden.



## Comparing *mustn't* and *not have to*

- There is a big difference in meaning between ***mustn't*** and ***not have to***.
- Below are two different offices and their rules
- What is the difference in meaning?

### OFFICE 1

You **mustn't** forget to wash your lunch dishes.

### OFFICE 2

You **don't have to** wash your lunch dishes.



- In office 1: Washing up after your lunch is necessary.
- In office 2: It's not necessary to wash up, it's your choice.



## Look at these examples

Pay close attention to the difference in meaning!



You **mustn't** walk on the grass.

He **doesn't have to** work today, he's on holiday!



She **mustn't** come to the office today if she is ill!

We **don't have to** call him today, we can do it tomorrow







## Fill in the gaps

Complete the sentences using the modals of obligation from the box

1. You \_\_\_\_\_ go there, it's very dangerous!
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ translate the document, a translator will do it.
3. We \_\_\_\_\_ go to the meeting, our team is not working on that project.
4. I \_\_\_\_\_ tell him the real reason or he will be so angry.
5. They \_\_\_\_\_ miss their flight!
6. You \_\_\_\_\_ buy another ticket, I got you one already.
7. I \_\_\_\_\_ leave my bag unattended at the airport.
8. She \_\_\_\_\_ finish the report this week, but she wants to.

mustn't

mustn't

mustn't

mustn't

doesn't have to

doesn't have to

don't have to

don't have to

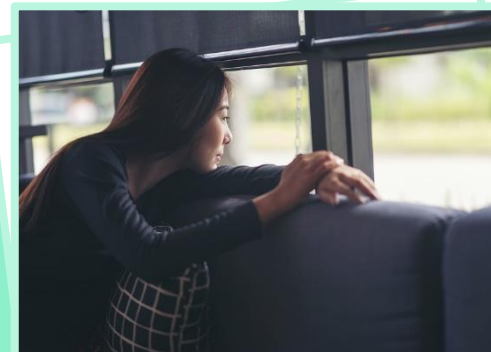
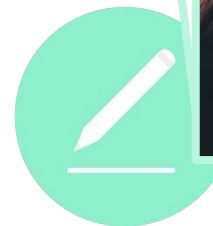


**Make a list of the things you *don't have to* do at work. Then make another list of the things you *mustn't* do at work**

I don't have to...

I mustn't...

Take care with  
the difference  
between the two!





Imagine you are...

Meeting a colleague to revise a report they have written. The report has some mistakes. Tell them what they *mustn't* and *don't have to* do in it.

- Maybe they have used language that is too informal
- Or, perhaps they have included images and this was not necessary





## Review: *should/shouldn't*

- Remember another way to talk about **obligation** is with *should* and *shouldn't*
  - We can use these to give our **opinion**
  - When we talk to someone else, we can use *should* or *shouldn't* to **give advice**

### Should

We should check with the manager if we want to leave early.

You should drink plenty of water.

Should I leave the air conditioner on during the lunch break?

### Shouldn't

I shouldn't park my car there.

You **shouldn't** drink so much coffee!

They shouldn't leave their dirty cups on the desk.



## Comparing *must/have to* and *should/shouldn't*



- *Must/have to* express a strong obligation or piece of advice.
- *Should/shouldn't* is a weaker obligation or piece of advice.

We **have to water** the office plants, or they'll die!

We **must water** the plants today!

We **should water** the plants today.



The advice is the same in the three sentences. The difference is how strongly the speaker feels.



## Comparing *must/have to* and *should/shouldn't*

Look at the examples below:



We **must remember** to wash our coffee mugs.

You **have** to sign your contract before you start the project.



We **should** re-use plastic cups.



## Comparing *must/have to* and *should/shouldn't*

Here are some more examples:



I **must** speak to Grandma today. She's 80!

We **should** give our old clothes to Betty, she's collecting for the refugees.



I **have to** go back to the coffee shop, I forgot Steven's!



## Advice time

Give pieces of advice to these four workers with problems at work

The printer is not working!



Tim



Sammy

I'm always stressed at work

I don't know how to use a Mac



Kara



Rob

I don't get along well with my colleagues





## Going back in time



Imagine you are talking to your 10-year-old self.

What are some things they *must* do? And that they *mustn't* do? What do they *not have to* do later in life?



## Discuss

Look at the following statements below and discuss them as a group



You **must** have a lot of money to be happy



You **should** always tell the truth





Finish the sentence using modals of obligation

**To have  
a good work-life  
balance....**

We mustn't...

We have to...

We must...

We should...

We don't have  
to...



## Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no

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## Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.  
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have time, go over  
the most difficult slides again



## Answer key

### Exercise 2, p.17

1. mustn't
2. doesn't have to
3. don't have to
4. mustn't
5. mustn't
6. don't have to
7. mustn't
8. doesn't have to

### Exercise 1, p.10

1. You must go shopping every day
2. We have to smoke outside
3. Do they have to do their homework today?
4. I must tell him the truth
5. Why must you go there?





## Unscramble the sentences

A

doesn't

to

he

today

have

drive

B

must

be

careful

money

with

we





check



## Homework answer key

### **Exercise 1, p.34**

A He doesn't have to drive today.  
B We must be careful with money.



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