

# Modals

- ◆ Modals are helping verbs
- ◆ Used with the base form of the verb, modals create verbal phrases.
- ◆ Modals do not change form.
- ◆ Modals never end in “s” even in 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular
- ◆ Use “not” to make modal verbs negative.
- ◆ Don’t use double modals.
- ◆ Modals lack past tense forms, except **could** and **would** which serve as the past of **can** and **will**.

<b>Can</b>	<p>present ability - I <i>can</i> ride a bike.</p> <p>opportunity - She <i>can</i> help you learn to ride a bike, when she is finished studying.</p> <p>permission - <i>Can</i> I try to ride the bike now?</p> <p>possibility and conditional - Anyone <i>can</i> learn to ride a bike, <i>if</i> they are not afraid to try.</p> <p>request - <i>Can</i> you teach me to ride a bike?</p> <p>willingness - I <i>can</i> teach you.</p>
<b>Could</b>	<p>past ability - I <i>could</i> ride a bike when I was younger.</p> <p>conditional - He <i>could</i> learn to ride a two wheeler, <i>if</i> his father removes the training wheels.</p> <p>possibility - Bill <i>could</i> be the best bike rider with some more practice.</p> <p>suggestion - Mark <i>could</i> ride his bike to campus, instead of driving his car.</p> <p>request - <i>Could</i> I use your bike?</p>
<b>May</b>	<p>polite request or permission - <i>May</i> I borrow your bike?</p> <p>possibility - He <i>may</i> be able to help you assemble the bike tomorrow.</p>
<b>Might</b>	<p>possibility, but not certainty - I <i>might</i> be able to let you borrow the bike, after I put air in the tires.</p> <p>conditional - This bike <i>might</i> be a good choice for cross country riding, <i>if</i> the seat is comfortable.</p> <p>suggestion - You <i>might</i> want to lower the seat, so that your legs reach the pedals.</p>
<b>Must</b>	<p>strong obligation - You <i>must</i> return the bike, if you use it.</p> <p>necessity - I <i>must</i> ride my bike to get my exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Substitute must with “have to” - You <i>have to</i> return the bike, if you use it.</li> </ul>
<b>Shall</b>	<p>formal invitation and future action. - Shall we go bike riding together tomorrow?</p>
<b>Should</b>	<p>mild obligation, recommendation, advice - You <i>should</i> wear a helmet when you ride a bike.</p> <p>expectation - He <i>should</i> finish the race around noon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Substitute should with “ought to” - You <i>ought to</i> wear a helmet when you ride a bike.</li> </ul>
<b>Will</b>	<p>future intent - I <i>will</i> go riding on Saturday.</p> <p>promise - We <i>will</i> definitely make time to ride together next weekend.</p> <p>prediction - The weatherman, however, reports that the winds <i>will</i> be strong.</p> <p>voluntary action - I <i>will</i> go anyway.</p>
<b>Would</b>	<p>conditional - I <i>would</i> ride the bike at night, <i>if</i> it had a light.</p> <p>past of will - He <i>would</i> ride his bike before he hurt his knee.</p>

Use the base form of the word with the modal. Modals do not change form.

- ◆ He could **ride** for long distances. (correct)    He could **rode** for long distances. (incorrect)

Modals never end in “s” even in the third person singular.

- ◆ She **should** peddle slower. (correct)    She **shoulds** peddles slower. ( incorrect)

Combine the base form of the verb with the modals - not with the infinitive “to.”

- ◆ He should ride with traffic. (correct)    He should to ride with traffic. (incorrect)

Use “not” to make modal verbs negative.

- ◆ I **cannot** ride a bike.
- ◆ I **could not** ride a bike because I was afraid of falling.
- ◆ I **may not** be riding next weekend because I have to work extra hours.
- ◆ She **might not** have a new bike, but it gets her where she needs to go.
- ◆ Bike riders under 17 years of age **must not** ride without helmets in Pennsylvania.
- ◆ Riders **shall not** break the traffic rules that apply to cars.
- ◆ When using hand signals to indicate turning, riders **should not** use their right arm.
- ◆ He **will not** go riding when it rains.
- ◆ The bike club **would not** participate in the race because they objected to the high entrance fee.

To form questions:

- ◆ **Can** I teach you how to ride a bike?
- ◆ **Should** we ask your mother first?
- ◆ **Might** it help if I let her know that you’ll be wearing a helmet?
- ◆ **Will** you let me take the training wheels off?

Do not use double modals.

- ◆ He **could can** fix the flat tire.
- ◆ I **will might** enter the bicycle challenge marathon.

Practice: Circle the best modal.

- ◆ He **can/ would** ride his bike when his car broke down.
- ◆ Bob **should not/ may not** ride down the middle of the busy road.
- ◆ **Might you/ could you** repair my broken wheel?
- ◆ My mother always said, “You **could/should** wear a helmet to protect your head.”
- ◆ **May/ can** I borrow your bike?
- ◆ I **must/ can** return the bike to the rental shop by 5 o’clock this evening.
- ◆ **Shall/ should we** take a tire patch kit with us to make repairs?