

A. Mira university

Department of Technology

Teacher: Yasmine TETAH

Modal verbs

Modals are those helping verbs, which express the 'mode' or 'manner' of the actions indicated by the main verbs. They express modes such as ability, possibility, probability, permission, obligation, etc.

The most commonly used modals are shall, should, will, would, can, could, may, might, must, have to, ought to, used to, need and dare.

Consider the difference between these two examples:

- a. I play basketball every Sunday.
- b. I can play basketball every Sunday.

Modals are used to:

1. Ask permission—may, can, could

Examples: May I come in?

Could I use your pen, please?

2. Make a request—can, could, would

Example: Could you please give me the doctor's telephone number?

3. Make an offer _would

Example: would you like some coffee?

4. Make Conditional sentences _would

Example: I would wait, if I were you.

5. Express a possibility—may, might, could

Example: It might rain during the night.

6. Give advice or suggestion—should

Example: You should wear a helmet while riding your motorbike.

7. necessity or compulsion—must, have to

Examples: We must slow down while driving in front of a school.

I have to submit my project.

8. Express prohibition

Example: You must not talk loudly in the library.

9. Express a promise or intention—will, shall

Example: I will always remember you.

10. Express a wish—may

Example: May you have a long life!

☒ A modal does not change according to the number or person of the subject.

Examples:

He can learn.

I can learn.

You can learn.

They can learn.

We can learn.

☒ A modal is always used with a verb in its basic form. The modal takes the tense while the main verb remains in its dictionary form.

Examples: I can run. I may run.

I could run. I might run.

☒ Modals can be used alone in response to a question.

Examples: Can you sing? I can.

Will you sing? I will.

Will you come? I may / I will.

☒ Modals, when joined with 'not' to form a negative, can be contracted.

Examples:

I can not run.

I can't run.

I will not run.

I won't run.

Exercise: Fill in the blanks by using appropriate modals.

a you please tell me the direction to the hotel?

b. You pay in cash. They do not accept credit cards.

c. I come home from the office today.

d. I ask you a question?

e. You clean your room.

f. keep the lights and fans switched off when they are not in use.

j. We improve the existing education system.

h. The weather be better tomorrow.

i. Sara go to see the movie. The reviews are good.

g. You absolutely be at the airport to receive her.

k. She take her meals regularly.

l. You reach home before eleven, she said.

m. we go for a walk?

n. The soldiers in the Army wear a uniform.

- o. There is one more point I..... refer to.
- p. You have worked hard. You..... pass.
- q. It is very cloudy. It..... rain.
- r. You..... be properly dressed when you come to office.
- s. you like to come to the party tomorrow?
- t. People..... not tell lies.

ANSWER KEY

A	B	C	D	E	F	J	H	I	G
Could	Have to	Can't	May	Should	Could	Must	Might	Should	Must

K	L	M	N	O	P	q	R	S	T
Should	Should	Can	Must	Should	Should	Might	Must	Would	Should