

# Modals

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## Most Commonly Used Modals

The following are the most commonly used modals.

Present Form	Past Form
Can	Could
Must	Ought to
Shall	Should
May	Might
Have to	Need
Will	Would

### Can

**“Can” is used in the following context:**

- Ability to do a job or work:  
**Ex.:** I can do this sum.
- Possession of specific power:  
**Ex.:** Only Principal can grant him leave.
- Sanction:  
**Ex.:** You can go out without pass.
- Permission or request:  
**Ex.:** Can you do this?

### Could

**“Could” is the past form of can. “Could” is used in the following context:**

- Possibility:  
**Ex.:** Anita could top the class.
- Request:  
**Ex.:** Could you help me?
- Advice:  
**Ex.:** You could always take healthy drinks.
- Condition:  
**Ex.:** If you could work hard, you would pass.

## **May**

**“May” can be used in the following context:**

- Requesting and/or granting:  
Ex.: You may go now.
- Possibility:  
Ex.: It may rain tonight.
- Desire of fervent wish:  
Ex.: May god help you!
- Pointed question:  
Ex.: How old may this boy be?

## **Might**

**“Might” is the past form of May. It can be used in the following context:**

- A state of fear:  
Ex.: I might cut my finger.

## **Must**

**“Must” is used in the following context:**

- Compulsion or obligation:  
Ex.: When you are studying, you must concentrate.
- Requirement or Prerequisite:  
Ex.: You must read the school in time.
- First person insistence:  
Ex.: I must finish my homework.
- Determination:  
Ex.: I must top the class.

## **Ought to**

**“Ought to” can be used in the following context:**

- Obligation or Duty:  
Ex.: We ought to love our country.
- Desirability:  
Ex.: You ought to have been there.

## **Have to**

**“Have to” can be used in the following context:**

- compulsion:  
Ex.: You have to do it.

**Note:** “Must not”, “ought not” and “have not to” are the negative forms of Must, ought to and Have to.

**Q. What is a modals**

A helping verb with a main verb when used to express the mode and attitude of the speaker is known as modals.

**Ex.:** You may go for game.