

Modal auxiliaries (Must)

Must

1-Obligation or requirement

- You must be back by 3 o'clock (You are obliged (by me) to...)
- Tell Betty she must be more careful with her money.
- I must go now, or I'll be late. (self-obligation – duty)
- In England the traffic must keep to the left.

In paraphrasing the meaning of 'must', we can use:

- It is obligatory that...
- It is essential that...
- It is necessary to...

Like 'May', must in questions and if clauses involves the hearer's authority instead of that of the speaker:

- Must I answer those questions?

Negative form: needn't

2-Logical necessity/ deduction:

- You must be joking.
- You have finished my dinner as well as yours, you must have been hungry.
- Mr X, you are not regular in your attendance, you must hate grammar.
- Mrs Jean mustn't have received my letter; otherwise, she would have replied before now.
- She must be pleased because she passed the exam.

'Must', in this sense, means that the speaker has drawn a conclusion from things already known or observed.

Must with the meaning of logical necessity cannot normally be used in interrogative or negative clauses. Can is generally used instead of must in question:

- Can she be the one you mean?
- She must be the one you mean.
- She must be asleep = She can't be awake.

MODALS EXERCISES

1-Complete the responses to the statements, using must or can't, to suggest what seems to be the most likely explanation:

- 1-His fiancée writes to him every day. She must....
- 2-I don't seem to have my key with me. I...
- 3-He drives a Mercedes and his wife a Rolls Royce. They...
- 4-He has no idea what the book is about. He...
- 5-He talks about going to the moon next year. He...
- 6-She did not reply to the letter I sent her three months ago. She...
- 7-He said he would ring, but he hasn't. He...

1. Fill in the blanks with the positive or negative form of can, could or be able to. There may be more than one correct answer.

1. Can / Could you please help me wash the car?
2. I _____ go to Greece for my holiday. What do you think?
3. We _____ visit him next week.
4. Jessica _____ speak French and also Italian.
5. You _____ drink alcohol! It's forbidden by the religion and is very harmful for your health.
6. I _____ decide whether he's telling the truth.
7. She _____ finish painting the room by tomorrow. She's too busy.
8. He _____ take my car and bring it back later.
9. We _____ sleep. You are making too much noise.
10. We almost had an accident, but fortunately, the driver _____ stop in time.
11. I _____ see you tomorrow because I'm going away.
12. Luckily, the firemen _____ rescue the family from the burning building.

2. Fill in the blanks with the positive or negative form of may or might.

1. Mum said you may / might want me to do some shopping for you today.
2. Students _____ bring any books into the exam room.
3. Passengers _____ smoke in the toilets.
4. She looked like she _____ fall. So I held her arm.
5. We _____ as well invite friends over if we can't go out tonight.
6. Pupils _____ leave the school grounds during school hours.
7. You _____ like to visit the Prado while you're in Madrid.
8. _____ I hang my hat here, please?
9. _____ I open the window?

3. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of have to. There may be more than one correct answer.

1. I had to take an earlier flight. The later one was full.
2. I _____ go shopping yesterday. There was no food in the house.
3. I _____ try and eat less sugar. I'm having trouble with my teeth.
4. Jim _____ see the dentist on Friday. He doesn't receive patients on Wednesdays and

5. I _____ put on sunscreen lotion when I'm out in the sun.
6. The prime minister _____ resign. He's involved in too many scandals.
7. Workers in this factory _____ wear hard hats.
8. We _____ leave now. It's already eight o'clock and the baby is restless.
9. We _____ go to bed early tonight. We are leaving at 5.30 tomorrow morning.
10. You _____ send her flowers, even if you can't go to her dinner party.

4. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of mustn't or don't have to / needn't. There may be more than one correct answer.

1. Pupils needn't / don't have to attend the game. It's optional.
2. You _____ leave knives in places where babies can get hold of them.
3. We _____ bring sandwiches. Food will be provided.
4. You _____ play with the knife! You'll cut yourself.
5. You _____ rush. We've got plenty of time.
6. We _____ allow the killing of tigers to continue.
7. If the snow continues, you _____ go to school tomorrow.
8. She _____ worry. I'll see that her luggage is picked up.
9. I _____ pay the telephone bill until next week.
10. People _____ smoke in non-smoking areas.

5. Fill in the blanks with the positive or negative form of should or ought to.

1. People should check their tires frequently.
2. You _____ tell him all your problems when he is feeling so ill.
3. Jerry _____ be here by now. He said he'd leave his house at 8.30.
4. You really _____ bite your nails. It's a disgusting habit.

6-Choose the best explanation of these sentences.

1. You needn't have phoned before you came.
☐ It wasn't necessary to phone, but you did.
☐ It wasn't necessary to phone, and you didn't.
2. The concert must have ended early.
☐ The organisers were forced to end the concert early.
☐ It seems certain that the concert ended early.
3. She may not have finished the book.
☐ Perhaps she didn't finish the book.
☒ She wasn't allowed to finish the book.
4. You'd better ask Peter.
☐ You should ask Peter.
☐ It's good that you asked Peter.
5. She would often go for a run before breakfast.
☐ She often went for a run before breakfast.
☒ She often wanted to go for a run before breakfast, but didn't.

6. I didn't use to eat vegetables.
- ☐ I ate some vegetables in the past, but not often.
 - ☐ In the past, I didn't eat vegetables, but I do now.