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A small group of auxiliary verbs, called the modal verbs (or modal auxiliary verbs, modal auxiliaries, or simply modals) are only used in combination with ordinary verbs. A modal verb changes the other verb's meaning to something different from simple fact. Modals may express permission, ability, prediction, possibility, or necessity. The principal modal verbs are: can, could, may, might, must, ought, shall, should, will, and would. The modal verbs are different from ordinary verbs in several ways: 1) they have no inflections at all; that is, they lack an -ing form, an -ed form, and even an -s form for the third-person singular; 2) a modal verb is always followed by the infinitive form of a verb (unless that verb has already been stated) but never follows another verb; 3) modal verbs do not follow to and are not followed by to. (Ought to, like the near-modal verb have to, is a special case.) In their simple form, modal verbs normally refer to present or future time: I must be nearly there by now. I might arrive a bit later than I'd anticipated. A trip like this can take hours more than one expects. In English grammar, modal auxiliary verbs (often simply called modals) are a set of special helping verbs that add meaning and nuance to the main verb in a sentence. They dont stand alone as main verbs; instead, they modify the meaning of the main verb by expressing attitudes such as necessity, possibility, permission, or ability. Table of contentsA modal auxiliary verb is a type of auxiliary (helping) verb that is used together with a main verb to express various degrees of certainty, ability, permission, obligation, or other conditions. Unlike regular verbs, modal auxiliaries do not change form (no -s, -ed, or -ing endings) and are always followed by the base form of the main verb.Common Modal Auxiliaries in English:can, couldmay, mightshall, shouldwill, wouldmustought to (semi-modal)need, dare (in some contexts considered semi-modals)No Infinitive Form or Conjugation:Modals do not take -s, -ed, or -ing endings and do not have infinitive or participle forms.Incorrect: He cans run fast. (Should be He can run fast.)Followed by the Base Form of the Verb:After a modal auxiliary, use the main verb in its base (infinitive without to) form.Example: I can speak Spanish. (Not I can speaking Spanish.)No Do/Does for Questions and Negations with Modals:When forming questions or negatives, modals dont require the auxiliary do.Question: Can I go? (Not Do I can go?)Negative: I cannot (cant) go. (Not I do not can go.)Express Attitude or Mood:Modals convey the speakers attitude or mood regarding the likelihood, necessity, or permission related to the main verbs action.Ability:Present ability: I can swim.Past ability: I could run faster when I was younger.Permission:Can I use your phone? (Informal permission)Could I leave early? (More polite or formal request)Possibility:It can get very hot here in summer. (General possibility)He could be right. (Less certain possibility)Key Note:Could is the past tense of can but also used for more polite requests or less certain possibility in the present or future.Permission (More Formal):Possibility (More Uncertain):It may rain later. (Some possibility)He might arrive soon. (Even less certain than may)Key Note:May is often more formal and slightly more certain than might. Might often suggests a weaker possibility.Future (Shall):Traditionally used with I or we to express the future or make suggestions. In modern English, will is more common.I shall return by evening. (Formal, old-fashioned)Advice or Recommendation (Should):You should see a doctor. (Strong advice)We should leave now. (Its a good idea)Key Note:Should is commonly used for advice or moral obligations. Shall in modern usage often appears in legal or formal documents.Future (Will):I will visit you tomorrow. (Future action)Willingness / Offers:I will help you carry those bags. (Volunteering)Conditionals and Past Habits (Would):If I had more time, I would travel the world. (Conditional)When I was a child, I would play outside for hours. (Repeated past actions)Polite Requests:Would you pass me the salt? (More polite than will you)Key Note:Will expresses certainty about the future. Would is often used to make polite requests, talk about hypothetical situations, or describe habitual actions in the past.Necessity or Obligation:You must wear a helmet. (Strong obligation)Logical Deduction:She must be at work now. (You conclude this logically)Key Note:Must is strong and absolute, implying theres no choice. Its used for personal obligations or to express a confident conclusion about a situation.Moral Duty or Strong Advice:You ought to apologize.We ought to help them.Key Note:Ought to is similar to should but can sound slightly more formal or stronger. Unlike other modals, ought is followed by to + base form.Need:As a modal, need often appears in negative sentences or questions, suggesting necessity.You need not come if you dont want to. (No obligation)Dare:As a modal, used in questions or negatives to express challenge or courage.Dare you tell him the truth? (Challenging someone)Key Note:Need and dare can act as both modal and regular verbs, depending on context. As modals, they dont use do/does/did in questions or negatives.Modal verbs can add different levels of politeness or certainty:Polite Requests: Could, Would, MightCould you help me? (More polite than Can you help me?)Degrees of Certainty:He must be at home. (High certainty)He may be at home. (Moderate certainty)He could be at home. (Possible)He might be at home. (Less certain)He should be at home. (Likely expectation)Negatives: Place not immediately after the modal.I cannot swim. or I cant swim.You should not go there. or You shouldnt go there.Questions: Invert the subject and the modal.Can you swim?Would you help me?No auxiliary do is required for forming questions or negatives with modals.Modal auxiliary verbs play a crucial role in English communication. They allow speakers and writers to add layers of meaning, express attitudes, and navigate social conventions such as politeness and formality. By understanding the various uses, forms, and nuances of modals like can, should, must, and others, you can convey your thoughts more precisely and create more dynamic, responsive, and contextually appropriate language. With practice, the use of modal auxiliaries will become second nature, improving both your spoken and written English. A modal verb (also called a modal auxiliary verb) is used along with a main verb to express possibility, ability, permission, or necessity. For example, in the statement you must leave, must is a modal verb indicating that its necessary for the subject (you) to perform the action of the verb (leave).The modal verb will is used to form the future tense, indicating an action that has not yet occurred (e.g., I will clean the garage).Examples: Modal verbs in a sentenceWe should listen to some music.Can you drive me to the airport?Amanda might practise her German. Be assured that you'll submit flawless writing. Upload your document to correct all your mistakes. How are modal verbs used in sentences?Modal verbs are used along with a main verb to indicate ability, necessity, possibility, and permission. In sentences containing modal verbs, the main verb typically takes the infinitive form. Modal verbs come before main verbs and never change form.Examples: How to use modal verbsI might walk to work today.You may have as many cookies as youd like.Lina must order tickets in advance if she wants to go to the theatre. The academic proofreading tool has been trained on 1000s of academic texts and by native English editors. Making it the most accurate and reliable proofreading tool for students. Upload my document Modal verbs listBelow is a table that illustrates some of the various uses of modal verbs. Note that modal verbs are very commonly used in a wide variety of senses this table doesnt cover every possible usage.Modal verbFunctionExampleCanIndicate abilityIndicate possibilityIndicate permission (informal)Make a request (informal)Javi can play the guitar.We can drive or walk.You can borrow that book.Can I have some water?CouldPast form of canIndicate possibilityMake a polite requestShe could speak French.You could become a chef.Could you tell me the time?MayIndicate possibilityIndicate permission (formal)Make a request (formal)Dana may arrive late.You may enter.May I respond?MightIndicate possibilityI might order pizza.MustIndicate obligationIndicate likelihoodCyclists must wear helmets.You must be very proud.ShallIndicate a future action (normally used only with I and we)Ask a question (normally used only with I and we)I shall attend.Shall we arrange a meeting?ShouldMake a suggestionIndicate likelihoodYou should watch that film.Tom should be at the office.WillIndicate a future action or eventMake a polite requestFay will book the venue.Will you get the door?WouldPast form of willMake a polite requestShe would often work late.Would you call back later? Modal verbs are classed as a type of auxiliary verb. Auxiliary verbs are used along with a main verb to express tense, mood, or voice. However, unlike modal verbs, regular auxiliary verbs follow subject-verb agreement and must be conjugated for tense and mood.Examples: Auxiliary verbs in a sentenceMary was building a sandcastle.Gordon has burned the toast.Do you know what time it is?Modal verbs can be used along with auxiliary verbs to refer to possible past, continuous, or future action.When a modal verb is followed by another auxiliary verb (e.g., have, be), the main verb takes either the past participle form (typically ending in -ed, -n, or -t) or the present participle form (ending in -ing).The modal verb will is used in all aspects of the future tense (e.g., I will talk, you will be travelling).Examples: Modal and auxiliary verbs combinedHe should have asked me first.You may be wondering what I mean.Farrah will have finished work by then.Modal verbs and moodThe grammatical mood of a verb indicates the intention of the sentence. Modal verbs and auxiliary verbs are used along with a main verb to express mood.Grammatical moodFunctionExampleIndicativeState a factLana is drinking coffee.ImperativeExpress a command or a request (often with a negative auxiliary verb)Dont forget to call.InterrogativeAsk a questionWould you open the window?ConditionalExpress a conditionYou should leave now if you want to get the bus.SubjunctiveExpress a wish, doubt, or hypothetical situationIf you were free, we could watch a movie. The academic proofreading tool has been trained on 1000s of academic texts and by native English editors. Making it the most accurate and reliable proofreading tool for students. Upload my document Other uses of modal verbsModal verbs have various other functions in English. They can also be used:In indirect speechIn negative statementsFor emphasisIndirect speechModal verbs are used in indirect speech to indicate what someone else said. While most modal verbs stay the same when used in indirect speech, the past form of some modal verbs is used instead (e.g., can becomes could).Examples: Modal verbs and reported speechDarren said I will visit on Saturday.Darren said he would visit on Saturday.Pria said we should go to France.Pria said we should go to France.Negative statementsIn negative statements containing modal verbs, the adverb not comes immediately after the modal verb and before all other verbs. The negative form is often contracted (e.g., would not becomes wouldnt).Examples: How to use modal verbsTera cant focus because her brother is playing the drums.You mustnt play football inside the house anymore.EmphasisIn everyday conversation, people sometimes place emphasis on a modal verb to refute a previous statement or question. The emphasised word is often italicised when written down.Examples: Modal verbs emphasising a statementWhy cant you be nice?I can be nice!You wont finish the project on time.I will finish it on time!Other interesting language articlesIf you want to know more about commonly confused words, definitions, common mistakes, and differences between US and UK spellings, make sure to check out some of our other language articles with explanations, examples, and quizzes. Frequently asked questions Is it would of or would have? Would is a modal verb thats often used along with the auxiliary verb have to indicate that something was possible in the past but no longer is (e.g., She would have been a professional athlete if she hadnt broken her leg). It can be contracted to wouldve.People sometimes mistakenly write would of because of its similar pronunciation. However, would of is never correct. What does may mean? May is a modal verb used to indicate possibility (e.g., I may miss the bus), make a request (e.g., May I have a drink?), or indicate permission (e.g., You may sit down). We strongly encourage students to use sources in their work. You can cite our article (APA Style) or take a deep dive into the articles below. This Scribbr article Ryan, E. (2023, December 06). What Is a Modal Verb? | Definition & Examples. Scribbr. Retrieved 26 May 2025, from Sources Aarts, B. (2011). Oxford modern English grammar. Oxford University Press. Butterfield, J. (Ed.). (2015). Fowlers dictionary of modern English usage (4th ed.). Oxford University Press. Show all sources (3) Garner, B. A. (2016). Garners modern English usage (4th ed.). Oxford University Press. Modal verbs are easy to spot because there are so few of them. In addition to must, shall, will, should, would, can, could, may and might, we can add ought to and have to.If we are told that we 'must' do something, like complete homework, the modal verb 'must' indicates a high level of modality. There is no argument. The homework has to be done.But if we are told that we 'may' do homework, the modal verb 'may' suggests a degree of choice. Modal verbs are useful for telling us about how necessary, or possible, something is.The level of modality in different texts is interesting. Think about the difference between the following sentences:Cinderella could go to the ball.Cinderella can go the ball.Cinderella will go to the ball.Cinderella might feel happiest about the last one, as it sounds the most likely. In English, modal verbs and auxiliary verbs are vital for constructing sentences. While auxiliary verbs help form tenses, questions, and negatives, modal verbs express necessity, possibility, and ability. Understanding how these verbs work can significantly improve your sentence structure and communication. This blog post helps learn the distinctions and proper usages of modal and auxiliary verbs with clear definitions and examples. Auxiliary verbs, also known as helping verbs, are verbs that assist the main verb in a sentence to form different tenses, questions, and negatives. They do not carry meaning on their own but provide support to the main verb. The most common auxiliary verbs are be, have, and do. Auxiliary verbs can be classified into three categories: Primary Auxiliary Verbs: These include be, have, and do. They help form various tenses, questions, and negatives. Modal Auxiliary Verbs: These verbs express ideas such as ability, permission, necessity, and possibility. Examples include can, could, may, might, should, would, must, etc. Semi-Auxiliary Verbs: These are combinations of auxiliary verbs that function in specific contexts. Examples include ought to, need to, have to, and used to. Primary Auxiliary Verbs: Be (am, is, are, was, were, being, been) Have (have, has, had) Do (do, does, did) Modal Auxiliary Verbs: Can Could Will Would Shall Should May Might Must Ought to Semi-Auxiliary Verbs: Modal verbs are a type of auxiliary verb used to express ability, permission, possibility, necessity, or obligation. These verbs do not change form for different subjects and are followed by the base form of the main verb. Here is a list of some common modal verbs used in English: Can Could May Might Must Shall Should Will Would Modal verbs can be used in different forms: Positive Form: I can swim. Negative Form: I cannot swim. Question Form: Can you swim? FeatureAuxiliary VerbsModal VerbsFunctionSupport main verb for tense, negation, etc.Express possibility, necessity, etc.Examplesbe, have, docan, must, may, shouldUsageUsed to form tenses, questions, and negativesUsed to express attitudes toward actions or events Understanding modal and auxiliary verbs with usage Modal VerbsAuxiliary VerbsCanBeCouldAmMayIsMightAreMustWasShallWereShouldBeingWillBeenWouldHaveOught toHasNeedHadDareDoUsed toDoesDid Learn modal and auxiliary verbs List with rules and clear examples These verbs are essential components of English grammar. They help convey meaning and structure in sentences, expressing ability, permission, necessity, and more. Here are some examples Sentences of Modal and Auxiliary Verbs. You should finish your homework before going out. He can swim very well. They might come to the party later. We must leave immediately to catch the train. You could try a different approach to solve the problem. I would like to visit you next week. She may join us for dinner tonight. He will help you with your project. They should apologize for their behavior. I can speak three languages.She is playing soccer right now. We have finished our work for the day. He was reading a book when I called him. They are studying for their final exams. I am writing an email to my friend. They were waiting for the bus when it started to rain. He does his homework every evening. She has already eaten lunch. We did our chores before going out. I have been working here for two years. Auxiliary Verbs: I can to swim. I can swim. She has running fast. She has run fast. They are goes to the event. They are going to the event. I do seen her today. I did see her today. We have eats lunch already. We have eaten lunch already. He does running every day. He does run every day. Modal Verbs: He is played the piano yesterday. He played the piano yesterday. I can sings well. I can sing well. She should goes to the doctor. She should go to the doctor. You shouldn't study harder. You should study harder. We will goes to the party. We will go to the party. I could plays the guitar. I could play the guitar. Choose the correct auxiliary verb for the sentence. I ____ going to the market. (am/are/is) He ____ play the guitar. (can/could) Answers: I am going to the market. He can play the guitar. Complete the sentences using a modal verb. You ____ eat more vegetables. (should) I ____ help you with that. (can) Answers: You should eat more vegetables. I can help you with that. What is the difference between auxiliary and modal verbs? Auxiliary verbs help form tenses, questions, and negatives, such as be, have, and do. Modal verbs express possibility, necessity, or permission, such as can, may, and must. Can modal verbs change form? No, modal verbs do not change form for different subjects. For example, He can swim and I can swim both use can without any change. How do auxiliary verbs function in questions? Auxiliary verbs help form questions by inverting the subject and the auxiliary verb. For example: She is coming. Is she coming? Modal verbs and auxiliary verbs are essential components of English grammar. By understanding how to use them properly, you can enhance your communication and form more accurate sentences. Whether youre expressing ability, obligation, or possibility, mastering these verbs will significantly improve your English proficiency. You might also like Modal Verbs Auxiliary Verbs Phrasal Verbs in English Are you struggling to understand the concept of modal verbs? Look no further! In this article, we will dive into the basics of modal verbs and provide you with a clear understanding of their function in English grammar.It is important to note that modal verbs have a unique set of rules that differ from regular verbs. For example, they do not use an s for the third person singular, and they make questions by inversion. It is also important to understand the different nuances of each modal verb and how they are used in context. So, lets get started and explore the world of modal verbs together!Pin Modal verbs are a special class of auxiliary verbs that are used to modify the meaning of the main verb in a sentence. They are also known as modal auxiliary verbs or simply modals. Modal verbs are used to express different kinds of meanings such as possibility, ability, permission, necessity, and more.Modal verbs are always used in combination with ordinary verbs and they change the meaning of the verb to something different from simple fact. They are commonly used in English and are an essential part of the language.The following are some of the most common modal verbs in English:CanCouldMayMightMustShallShouldWillWouldEach of these modal verbs has a specific meaning and usage in English. For example, can is used to express ability, may is used to express possibility, and must is used to express necessity.Modal verbs are also used to create different tenses in English. For example, could is used to create the past conditional tense, while will is used to create the future tense.It is important to note that modal verbs do not have infinitive or participle forms. They are always used in their base form, and they do not take the -ing or -ed endings.In summary, modal verbs are a special class of auxiliary verbs that are used to modify the meaning of the main verb in a sentence. They are used to express different kinds of meanings such as possibility, ability, permission, necessity, and more. Understanding the usage of modal verbs is essential for effective communication in English. Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs that express a range of meanings such as ability, permission, possibility, obligation, and advice. Here are the different types of modal verbs:AbilityModal verbs of ability express whether you are capable of doing something or not. The most common modal verbs of ability are can and could. Here are some examples:You can speak English fluently.I could run a marathon when I was younger.PermissionModal verbs of permission express whether you are allowed to do something or not. The most common modal verbs of permission are may and can. Here are some examples:May I leave early today?Can I borrow your car for the weekend?PossibilityModal verbs of possibility express the likelihood of something happening. The most common modal verbs of possibility are may, might, could, and can. Here are some examples:It may rain later today.The train might be delayed.She could be at home.ObligationModal verbs of obligation express whether you are required to do something or not. The most common modal verbs of obligation are must and should. Here are some examples:You must submit your report by Friday.You should apologize for your mistake.AdviceModal verbs of advice express recommendations or suggestions. The most common modal verbs of advice are should and ought to. Here are some examples:You should exercise regularly to stay healthy.You ought to try the new restaurant in town.In summary, modal verbs are essential in expressing different meanings in English. Understanding the different types of modal verbs can help you communicate more effectively and accurately.Modal Verbs: Rules & ExamplesLearn how and when to use modal verbs in English with rules and example sentences.1. To indicate that something is probable or possible, or not so.For example:It is sunny today; it must be warm outside. = It is sunny today; it is probably warm outside.His mobile is not reachable; he may/might/could be travelling by metro. = His mobile is not reachable; it is possible that he is travelling by metro.This cant be our bill. = It is not possible that this is our bill.2. Can and could are used to refer to skills and abilities. For example:He can cover a hundred metres in under ten seconds.My father could see perfectly before the age of fifty.I cant ride a horse.3. Must is used to indicate that something is necessary or of extreme importance, and should is used to suggest that something is advisable. For example:You must do your homework.You mustnt skip school.You should say sorry.You shouldnt smoke.4. Can, could and may are used to ask for, give and withhold permission. For example:Can I try my hand at it?Could we disperse early today?You may not enter the premises.5. Will and would are used to refer to habits and inclinations.For example:When I was a child, I would often climb trees.I will never refuse you anything.He would never do such a thing.Note: These verbs differ from ordinary verbs in 3 respects.When used with the third person singular (he, she), they dont require the addition of an s.They can be used to form questions by inverting the structure of the sentence.They can be followed directly by the verb, without the use of to. Modal verbs are an essential part of English grammar. They are used to express a variety of meanings such as ability, possibility, permission, and obligation. In this section, we will discuss the usage of modal verbs in statements, questions, and negative sentences.In StatementsModal verbs are often used in statements to express various meanings. Here are some examples:Ability: I can speak French fluently.Possibility: It may rain tomorrow.Permission: You may leave the room now.Obligation: You must finish your homework before going out.Note that when using modal verbs in statements, the main verb is always in its base form (infinitive) without to.In QuestionsModal verbs are also commonly used in questions to ask for permission, ability, or possibility. Here are some examples:Permission: May I leave the room now?Ability: Can you swim?Possibility: Could it be true?In questions, the modal verb is usually placed at the beginning of the sentence.In Negative SentencesModal verbs can also be used in negative sentences to express the absence of ability, permission, or obligation. Here are some examples:Ability: I cannot speak French fluently.Permission: You may not leave the room now.Obligation: You must not forget to lock the door.In negative sentences, the word not is added after the modal verb.It is important to note that some modal verbs have different meanings depending on the context. For example, must can express obligation, but it can also be used to express a strong recommendation or deduction. In addition, some modal verbs have more than one form, such as may and might, which can both be used to express possibility.Overall, modal verbs are an important part of English grammar and are used in a variety of contexts. By understanding their usage in statements, questions, and negative sentences, you can improve your English communication skills. Modal verbs are often used with other verbs to create phrases that convey a specific meaning. Here are some common modal verb phrases and their meanings:Cant help but This phrase is used to express that you cannot stop yourself from doing something. For example, I cant help but smile when I see puppies.Have to This phrase is used to express obligation or necessity. For example, I have to finish my homework before I can go out.Need to This phrase is used to express that something is necessary. For example, I need to drink water after exercising.Should have This phrase is used to express regret about something that was not done in the past. For example, I should have studied more for the test.Would rather This phrase is used to express a preference. For example, I would rather stay at home than go to the party.Must have This phrase is used to express certainty about something that happened in the past. For example, He must have left his phone at home.Might as well This phrase is used to suggest doing something because there is no reason not to. For example, Since we have some extra time, we might as well go for a walk.Modal verb phrases can be very useful in expressing specific meanings and adding nuance to your language. Its important to use them correctly and in the appropriate context. When it comes to understanding the English language, its important to know the difference between modal verbs and auxiliary verbs. While both of these types of verbs are used to help the main verb in a sentence, there are some key differences between them.Modal VerbsModal verbs, also known as modal auxiliary verbs, are a group of verbs that give additional information about the function of the main verb. They show possibility, intent, ability, or necessity. Modal verbs do not change their appearance, and they are used alongside the infinitive form of the main verb of a sentence.Some common examples of modal verbs include:CanShouldMustMayMightWillWouldCouldShallModal verbs are used to show if you believe something is certain, possible, or impossible. They can also be used to talk about ability, ask permission, and make requests and offers.Auxiliary VerbsAuxiliary verbs, also known as helping verbs, are used to help the main verb in a sentence. They change according to certain factors in the sentence, such as tense, person, and number.Some common examples of auxiliary verbs include: Auxiliary verbs can be used to form different tenses, such as the present perfect or past continuous. They can also be used to form questions and negatives.In summary, the main difference between modal verbs and auxiliary verbs is that modal verbs do not change their appearance, while auxiliary verbs change according to certain factors in the sentence. Understanding the difference between these two types of verbs can help you to use them correctly in your writing and speaking. When it comes to tenses, modal verbs are quite unique. Unlike regular verbs, modal verbs do not change their form to indicate different tenses. They are used in their base form regardless of the time frame.Modal verbs can refer to present and future time, but only some of them can refer to past time. Here is a table showing the modal verbs that can be used to refer to past time:Modal VerbPast Time Usagecouldability in the pastmightpossibility in the pastshouldobligation in the pastwouldpast habit or willingnessFor example, I could swim when I was younger or He would always help me with my homework.Its important to note that when using modal verbs to refer to past time, the main verb in the sentence should be in the base form as well. For example, I could have gone to the party, but I decided not to.In addition to the past time usage, here are some examples of how modal verbs can be used in different tenses:Present: You should eat more vegetables.Future: We will have to leave early tomorrow.Perfect: He must have forgotten his phone at home.Continuous: They might be playing tennis right now.Overall, modal verbs are a versatile and useful tool in English grammar. By understanding how they can be used in different tenses, you can effectively communicate your intentions and convey meaning in your writing and speech.Frequently Asked QuestionsWhat are some examples of modal verbs in English?Modal verbs are used to express ability, possibility, necessity, and permission. Some examples of modal verbs in English include can, may, must, shall, will, could, might, should, and would.How many modal verbs are there in English?There are nine modal verbs in English: can, may, must, shall, will, could, might, should, and would.What is the definition of modal verbs and how are they used?Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs that are used to express various meanings such as ability, possibility, necessity, and permission. They are followed by the base form of a verb and do not change their form based on the subject of the sentence. Modal verbs can also be used to make requests, give advice, and express opinions.What is a good worksheet for practicing modal verbs?There are many worksheets available online for practicing modal verbs. One good worksheet is the Modal Verbs Practice worksheet from Englishlinx.com. This worksheet includes exercises for practicing the different uses of modal verbs in English.What are some common sentences using modal verbs?Some common sentences using modal verbs include:I can swim.You should study for the test.He may arrive late.We must finish the project by Friday.They could come to the party.How do you pronounce modal verbs correctly?Modal verbs are pronounced with stress on the first syllable. For example, can is pronounced as kan, may is pronounced as may, and must is pronounced as must. Our academic editing and proofreading services Your dissertation can be carefully and sensitively proofread by one of our talented, professional editors, ensuring that your written English is clear, fluent and precise.A piece of work that you can take immense pride in.Dissertation Proofreading Writing your PhD thesis invariably takes great time and effort.By using our thesis proofreading service you can be sure that all your endeavours to build an original, persuasive argument will be fully recognized and appreciated.Thesis Proofreading Essay writing can be a major challenge, requiring language that is concise, vigorous and engaging.Our experienced editors can offer invaluable advice on producing winning essays so that eventually you will no longer even need our essay proofreading service.Essay Proofreading Writing an academic essay or dissertation can be difficult and challenging. When you submit your work or prepare your essay for publication you need 100% certainty that it is completely free of errors, inconsistencies and grammatical muddle.By using the Scribbr Academic Proofreading Service all mistakes are corrected and with our friendly feedback you will learn how to be a better writer.Weve already proofread over 10,000 academic documents! Scribbrs proofreading and editing services are rated 4.7/5 based on 14,907 reviews on Trustpilot. If you are an ESL student whose English skills leave room for improvement, or just wish to ensure there are no language mistakes in your document, then why not use the Scribbr Academic Proofreading Service?By using our proofreading service all mistakes will be corrected via Track Changes in Microsoft Word. Our editors will also provide friendly, helpful feedback on how to improve your writing. Scribbr specializes in proofreading academic documents. All our editors have themselves written adissertationor thesis and have first-hand experience of all the struggles that this entails.Why not allow these willing specialists to help to improve your own writing? Scribbr has many satisfied customers and has already proofread over 10,000 documents.We would love to help you improve your document too. Scribbr is an academic proofreading service founded in 2012. The company has grown to include over 400 editors, and is now one of the largest academic proofreading companies.We deliver premium quality work at a fair and competitive price. Both students and academics value our quality and our prompt service, rating our service at4.5. Get expert help from Scribbrs academic editors, who will proofread and edit your essay, thesis, or dissertation to perfection. Detect and resolve unintentional plagiarism with the Scribbr Plagiarism Checker, so you can submit your paper with confidence. Generate accurate references and citations with Scribbrs free reference generator and save hours of repetitive work. Our dream team Youre not alone. Together with our team and highly qualified editors, we answer all your questions about academic writing.Open 24/7, 365 days a year. Always available to help you. Meet the team Scribbr Knowledge Base Free resources used by 4,000,000 students every month. Bite-sized videos that guide you through the writing process. Get the popcorn, sit back, and learn! Ready-made slides for teachers and professors that want to kickstart their lectures. Accessible how-to guides, full of examples that help you write a flawless essay, proposal, or dissertation. Handy checklists to make sure you don't forget anything important. Time-saving templates that you can download and edit in Word or Google Docs. Modal verbs are a specific type of auxiliary verb that express necessity, possibility, permission, ability, or obligation. These verbs are integral to English grammar, helping to convey the speakers attitude and mood regarding the action in the sentence. Understanding modal verbs is crucial for mastering English communication skills. This article will define what modal verbs are, explain their usage, and provide examples to illustrate their functions. Definition of Modal Verbs Modal verbs, also known as modals, are auxiliary verbs that modify the main verb in a sentence to express different shades of meaning. Unlike regular verbs, modals do not change form based on the subject and do not use to before the following verb. Common modal verbs include can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should, must, and ought to. Examples of Modal Verbs Here are some examples of modal verbs in sentences: Can: She can swim very fast. Could: Could you help me with my homework? May: May I leave the room? Might: It might rain later. Will: I will call you tomorrow. Would: Would you like some coffee? Shall: Shall we go for a walk? Should: You should see a doctor. Must: You must wear a seatbelt. Ought to: You ought to apologise. How to Use Modal Verbs in Sentences? Modal verbs are used before the main verb in a sentence and help to express different nuances such as ability, possibility, permission, and obligation. Expressing Ability Can and could are used to express ability. For example: Present ability: She can speak four languages. Past ability: He could play the piano when he was five. Expressing Possibility May, might, and could are used to indicate possibility. For example: It may snow tomorrow. You might win the lottery. She could be at the office. Asking for Permission Can, could, and may are used to ask for permission. For example: Can I leave early today? Could I borrow your pen? May I use your phone? Making Requests and Offers Can, could, will, and would are used for making requests and offers. For example: Request: Can you pass the salt? Polite request: Could you open the window? Offer: Will you have some tea? Polite offer: Would you like some help? Expressing Obligation and Necessity Must, should, and ought to are used to express obligation and necessity. For example: You must finish your homework. You should wear a coat. You ought to respect your elders. Why Is It Important to Learn Modal Verbs? Learning modal verbs is essential because they add depth and precision to your communication. They allow you to express not just actions, but also attitudes, degrees of politeness, and levels of certainty. Understanding modal verbs helps you navigate various social and professional interactions more effectively. Enhancing Communication Skills Modal verbs enable you to make requests, offer help, give advice, and express possibilities in a nuanced manner. For instance, saying Can you help me? is more direct than Could you help me? which is softer and more polite. Navigating Social Interactions Using modal verbs appropriately helps you interact with others in socially acceptable ways. For example, using may for permission in formal settings (May I come in?) shows respect and politeness. Clarifying Intentions Modal verbs help clarify your intentions, whether youre expressing necessity (You must stop smoking), giving advice (You should try this), or indicating a future action (I will call you). To Sum Up Modal verbs are a fundamental component of English grammar, providing essential tools for expressing a wide range of meanings. By understanding what modal verbs are and how to use them, you can improve your communication skills and convey your thoughts more accurately. Whether youre asking for permission, making a request, or expressing an obligation, mastering modal verbs will enhance your ability to interact effectively in English. Enhance Your Writing with Proofreading.co.uk Dont let minor errors undermine the impact of your writing. At Proofreading.co.uk, our team of experienced editors will meticulously review your document, correcting grammar, punctuation, and spelling to ensure clarity and coherence. With our expertise, you can be confident that your message will shine through with precision and professionalism. We will also provide you with a track changes document, allowing you to review and improve your writing with our feedback. This collaborative approach empowers you to learn from your mistakes and enhance your writing skills for future projects. Fill out the form to receive a bespoke quote and take the first step towards polished, professional writing. Share copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. A modal auxiliary is a type of verb that helps express the mood or intention of the main verb in a sentence. Modal auxiliary verbs are used to indicate abilities, possibilities, permissions, necessities, and obligations. Unlike main verbs, modal auxiliary verbs do not change form based on the subject and are always followed by the base form of the main verb. In this article, we will explain what is modal auxiliary, the use of modal auxiliaries, and provide modal auxiliary examples with answers to help you understand them better. We will also include modal auxiliaries exercises with answers pdf and modal auxiliaries worksheets with answers to help you practice. 24 Modal Auxiliary VerbsThere are 24 modal auxiliary verbs in English, which can be categorized into different types based on their function. Here is a list of the main modal auxiliary verbs examples:Can Ability, permission, possibilityCould Past ability, polite request, possibilityMay Permission, possibilityMight Possibility, polite suggestionShall Future intention, strong suggestionShould Advice, probability, obligationWill Future certainty, willingnessWould Past habits, polite requestMust Necessity, strong obligationOught to Moral duty, adviceNeed NecessityDare Challenge, courageSome semi-modals also function similarly, such as:Have to ObligationBe able to AbilityHad better Strong adviceWould rather PreferenceUnderstanding these modal auxiliary verbs helps in improving communication skills and writing clarity.Do Check: Modal Verbs Each modal auxiliary has a specific function. Lets understand the use of modal auxiliaries in different contexts:Expressing AbilityModal auxiliary can is used to express ability.Example: She can swim very fast.Giving PermissionCan, may, could are used to grant or ask for permission.Example: You may leave early today.Example: Could I borrow your book?Expressing PossibilityMight, may, could, can are used for possibility.Example: It might rain today.Example: She can be at the office now.Expressing Necessity and ObligationMust, should, ought to, have to express obligation or necessity.Example: You must wear a seatbelt.Example: You should apologize.Making Requests and OffersWould, could, shall, will are used for polite requests and offers.Example: Would you help me with this project?Example: I shall assist you.Giving AdviceShould, ought to, had better express advice.Example: You should sleep early.Example: You had better revise for the exam.Expressing Certainty and ProbabilityMust, will, shall express certainty.Example: She must be at work by now.Example: It shall be completed soon.These modal auxiliary examples show how these verbs are used in different contexts. Do Check: Modals Exercises with AnswersModal Auxiliary Examples with AnswersHere are some modal auxiliary verb example sentences to understand their correct usage:Can He can solve the problem easily.Could She could run very fast when she was young.May You may take a break now.Might It might snow tomorrow.Shall I shall complete the assignment today.Should You should drink more water.Will They will arrive soon.Would I would prefer coffee over tea.Must You must finish your homework.Ought to You ought to help the poor.Need You need to study for the exam.Dare He dare not speak against the rules.These modal auxiliary verbs examples demonstrate their real-life application.Use of Modal Auxiliaries in SentencesHere are modal auxiliaries examples sentences to understand their structure better:She can drive a car. (Ability)You may go out now. (Permission)He must attend the meeting. (Necessity)We should eat healthy food. (Advice)I might visit my grandmother this weekend. (Possibility)She would like some tea. (Politeness)You need to exercise daily. (Necessity)We shall win this game. (Certainty)By practicing these modal auxiliary verb example sentences, you can enhance your grammar skills. Modal Auxiliaries Exercises with Answers PDFTo improve understanding, try some modal auxiliaries exercises with answers pdf:Exercise 1: Fill in the blanks with the correct modal auxiliary verbs.She ___ swim very well. (can)You ___ listen to your elders. (should)We ___ go to the park tomorrow. (may)He ___ complete the task before the deadline. (must)___ I borrow your pen? (Could)Answers:canshouldmaymustCouldYou can download more modal auxiliaries worksheets with answers to practice.Do Check: Auxiliary Verbs Incorrect: She must to finish the work.Correct: She must finish the work.Incorrect: He can to swim.Correct: He can swim.Incorrect: You should to go home.Correct: You should go home.Always remember, modal auxiliary verbs are followed by the base form of the verb. ConclusionWe have learned what is modal auxiliary, its functions, and various modal auxiliary examples with answers. The use of modal auxiliaries is essential in daily communication. By practicing modal auxiliaries exercises with answers pdf, you can improve your understanding and usage.To master these verbs, use modal auxiliaries worksheets with answers and keep practicing with modal auxiliary verb example sentences. Understanding the 24 modal auxiliary verbs will make your English more fluent and natural.So, start using modal auxiliary verbs examples in your daily conversations and enhance your grammar skills!FAQs on Modal Auxiliary A modal auxiliary is a helping verb that expresses ability, possibility, permission, necessity, or obligation. Examples include can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must, and ought to. The 24 modal auxiliary verbs include can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must, ought to, need, dare, and some semi-modal verbs like have to, be able to, had better, would rather, etc. Modal auxiliary verbs help express different functions in sentences, such as: Can Ability (She can run fast.) Must Obligation (You must wear a seatbelt.) May Permission (You may leave early.) Might Possibility (It might rain today.) Unlike main verbs, modal auxiliary verbs do not change form based on the subject and are always followed by the base form of the verb. Example: Correct: She can dance. Incorrect: She cans dance. Yes, modal auxiliary verbs can be used in negative sentences by adding 'not' after the modal verb. Example: She cannot swim. You should not be late. The Modal Auxiliariesare can, may, shall, will, must, ought to, used to, need, and dare.Can, may, shall,andwillhave special past formscould, might, should, and wouldrespectively, but must do not.Use of Modal AuxiliariesModal AuxiliariesFunctions asExamplesWill1. asking2. possibility3. suggestion1. Will you go to college?2. It will probably rain tomorrow.3. You will feel better if you take some rest.WouldrequestingWould you be able to lend me a pencil?Would you mind closing the door, please?Shall1. asking2. possibility1. Shall I do the homework?2. I hope I shall complete the homework within a week.Should1. suggestion2. seeking advice1. You should try the chocolate cake, its delicious.2. Should I take the train or the bus to get to the airport on time?Can1. ability2. possibility1. Lisa can speak French fluently.2. It will be a challenge, but I think we can complete the project if we work together.Could1. ability2. requesting1. He could do it.2. Could you pass the salt, please?May1. possibility2. permission3. offering1. Alisha may come here today.2. May I come in?3. May I get you a cup of coffee?Might1. possibility2. suggestion1. I might go to the beach this weekend if the weather is nice.2. We might try a new restaurant today.Must1. obligation2. certainty3. strong probability4. prohibition1. You must obey your parents.2. I must submit my assignment before the deadline.3. You must be hungry after a busy day at work.4. We must not waste our time.