

## VERBOS MODALES - MODAL VERBS

### 1. FIVE BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MODAL VERBS.

#### 2. VERBOS MODALES Y SUS USOS.

#### 3. CERTAINTY AND PROBABILITY: MUST, MAY, MIGHT, CAN'T (SPECULATING)

Los verbos modales se usan para:

- Expresar nuestras intenciones.
- Hablar sobre habilidad, probabilidad, obligación y prohibición.
- Hacer ofrecimientos, peticiones y sugerencias.

Los verbos modales siempre acompañan a otro verbo y funcionan como un tipo especial de verbo auxiliar.

### 1. FIVE BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MODAL VERBS

#### 1.1) AFIRMATIVA: Los verbos modales siempre van seguidos por la FORMA BASE de otro verbo (sin "to")

SUBJECT + MODAL VERB + BASE FORM + COMPLEMENTS

I **must go** now.

You **should go** to the doctor.

They **can speak** English very well.

#### 1.2) NEGATIVA: en negativa sólo se añade NOT o N'T al verbo modal.

SUBJECT + MODAL VERB + NOT + BASE FORM + COMPL.

He **can't speak** English.

She **shouldn't go** to the party.

You **mustn't smoke** here.

#### 1.3) INTERROGATIVA: Las preguntas se forman colocando el verbo modal delante del sujeto.

[ WH word] + MODAL VERB + SUBJECT + BASE FORM + COMPL.?

**Can you speak** English? Yes, I **can** / No, I **can't**

**Should I go** to the doctor? Yes, you **should** / No, you **shouldn't**

Where **must we go**?

\* En las respuestas cortas se usa un pronombre sujeto y el verbo modal en afirmativa o negativa.

#### 1.4) A los verbos modales NUNCA se les añade -S en la 3ª persona del singular (he-she-it) de Presente Simple.

Mary **must go** now / Peter **can't drive** a car.

He **should visit** a doctor. / She **can speak** English very well.

#### 1.5) Dos verbos modales NUNCA pueden ir juntos. Para evitarlo tendremos que usar otros verbos como los semimodales BE ABLE TO o HAVE TO.

He ~~will can~~ go to the party. → He **will be able to come** to the party.

You ~~will must~~ finish your homework. → You **will have to finish** your homework.

### 2. MODAL VERBS AND THEIR USES.

MODAL VERBS	SEMIMODAL VERBS
<b>CAN</b> = poder, saber <b>COULD</b> = podía/podría <b>SHOULD</b> = debería <b>MUST</b> = deber <b>MAY</b> = puede que <b>MIGHT</b> = podría	<b>BE ABLE TO</b> = poder, ser capaz de  <b>HAD BETTER</b> = más vale que <b>HAVE TO</b> = tener que <b>BE LIKELY TO</b> = ser probable que

ABILITY	OBLIGATION	PROHIBITION	ABSENCE OF NECESSITY	CERTAINTY AND PROBABILITY
CAN	MUST	MUSTN'T	DON'T HAVE TO DOESN'T HAVE TO	MUST
COULD	HAVE / HAS TO	CAN'T	NEEDN'T (DON'T NEED TO)	MAY/MIGHT COULD BE LIKELY TO
BE ABLE TO	SHOULD OUGHT TO (dar consejo) HAD BETTER			CAN'T

**CAN** = PODER, SABER / **COULD** = PODÍA, SABÍA, PODRÍA. (past form)

USOS:

1. Para expresar **HABILIDAD (ABILITY)** o capacidad para hacer algo ("saber")

*I can swim very well / My brother can't drive yet.*

**COULD** expresa habilidad en el pasado.

*I could speak English when I was eight years old.*

*He couldn't ride a bike when he was four.*

2. Para expresar **POSIBILIDAD (POSSIBILITY)**

*What can I do? You can finish your studies and go to the university.*

*You can work to earn money.*

*You can lose your time with your mobile phone.*

\* **BE ABLE TO** = poder, ser capaz de.

**Sustituye a CAN en futuro, gerundio y participio pasado.**

**También podemos verlo en formas de presente y pasado.**

*I will be able to drive a car.*

*Will you be able to come to the party tonight?*

*I haven't been able to finish the project.*

*Being able to speak English is useful.*

*Mary was able to pass (= could pass) the driving test.*

3. Para pedir y dar **PERMISO (PERMISSION)** y hacer **PETICIONES (REQUESTS)**.

**Usamos COULD en situaciones más formales** (¿Podría...?)

\**Can I go to the toilet? Yes, you can. / No, you can't.*

*Can you help me? / Can I have some water, please?*

*Can you close the door, please?*

\**Could I use my mobile phone?*

*Could you help me? / Could I have some water, please?*

*Could you close the door, please?*

**SHOULD / OUGHT TO** = DEBERÍA

USOS:

1. Para dar **CONSEJOS (to give ADVICE)** y hacer recomendaciones.

*I should eat more vegetables/ You should study more.*

*He shouldn't smoke/ They shouldn't tell lies.*

**HAD BETTER (= más vale que)** es un semimodal que también expresa consejo

- *You'd better leave now. Más vale que te vayas ahora.*

- *You'd better not drive. You've drunk a lot. Más vale que no conduzcas.*

**MUST** = DEBER

USOS:

1. **MUST** (forma afirmativa): para expresar la **OBLIGACIÓN (OBLIGATION)** o necesidad fuerte de hacer algo.

*You must brush your teeth. / You must do your homework.*

2. **MUSTN'T** (forma negativa): para expresar la **PROHIBICIÓN (PROHIBITION)** de hacer algo.

*You mustn't cheat in an exam. / You mustn't eat in the library.*

**HAVE TO** = TENER QUE (¡¡¡Cuidado con esta estructura que da problemas!!!)

ESTRUCTURA:

**AFF:** SUBJECT + **HAVE / HAS TO** + BASE FORM + COMPL.

**NEG:** SUBJECT + **DON'T / DOESN'T HAVE TO** + BASE FORM + COMPL.

**INT:** [ WH word ] + **DO / DOES** + SUBJECT + **HAVE TO** + BASE FORM + COMPL.

USOS:

1. **Forma afirmativa:** expresa la **OBLIGACIÓN** de hacer algo (como MUST). Sobre todo se utiliza con normas externas ya establecidas.

*You have to wear a helmet / You have to fasten your seatbelt in the car.*

*She has to wear uniform/ He has to be at home at 23:00.*

2. **Forma negativa:** expresa **que no es necesario o no hace falta hacer algo.**

*You don't have to get up early tomorrow. (= You needn't get up early)*

*She doesn't have to wear uniform in her school*

*He doesn't have to be at home at 23:00.*

\* Transforma estas oraciones a negativa e interrogativa:

*I must go to the dentist. She must study harder.*

*I have to go to the dentist. She has to study harder.*

### 3. CERTAINTY AND PROBABILITY: MUST, MAY, MIGHT, CAN'T (SPECULATING)

Estos verbos modales se usan para expresar el **grado de certeza o la probabilidad** que hay de que algo ocurra.

DEGREE OF CERTAINTY	MODAL VERB	EXAMPLE	SIMILAR EXPRESSIONS
Yes (100%)	<b>MUST</b>	He <b>must be</b> there. His car is outside. <i>Él debe de estar allí.</i>	It's certain I'm sure
Yes (50%)	<b>MAY</b>	He <b>may be</b> there. I'm not sure. <i>Puede que él esté allí.</i>	It's possible/probable Perhaps / maybe
Yes (25%)	<b>MIGHT</b>	He <b>might be</b> there. <i>Él podría estar allí.</i>	It's possible but unlikely
No (100%)	<b>CAN'T</b>	He <b>can't be</b> there. It's too late. <i>Él no puede estar allí.</i>	It isn't possible

\* **MUST** = deber de (**CERTAINTY or DEDUCTION**) Negative form CAN'T.  
Look at their house. They **must be** rich.  
You **must be** tired after the journey.

\* **MAY / MIGHT / COULD** = puede que (**PROBABILITY**)  
- MAY = "puede que"  
- MIGHT = "podría ser que" (indica una posibilidad más remota)  
- COULD = "puede que", "podría" (no se usa en negativa en este contexto)

It **may rain**. / It **may not rain**.  
I **might go out** tonight, I don't know.  
It **could be** difficult to pass the Chinese exam.  
I think Mary **may/might be** pregnant.

\* **CAN'T** = no puede (**NEGATIVE DEDUCTION** based on evidence).  
That girl **can't be** Sally. She is abroad.  
He **can't be** an architect. He has never studied at university.

\***BE LIKELY TO** (semimodal) = **es probable que**  
Es un verbo semimodal que también expresa probabilidad. Suele ir precedido por los siguientes adverbios:  
**very/ highly / quite** likely = muy / bastante probable

- He **is (very) likely to phone** in two hours. *(Es (muy)probable que él llame dentro de dos horas)*

- He **is not likely to pass** the exam. = He **is unlikely to pass** the exam.

*(No es probable que el apruebe el examen)*

- They **are likely to have finished** the project. *(Es probable que ellos hayan terminado el proyecto)*

ABILITY	ABILITY	I <b>can</b> speak English. Edmund Hillary <b>could</b> climb very well.
	to talk about a specific achievement	In 1953, they <b>managed to</b> get to the top of Mount Everest He <b>was able to</b> achieve that thanks to Sherpa Norgay. From the top they <b>could</b> see thousands of miles away.

SPECULATING	FUTURE	SURE	They <b>must</b> be at home, their car is outside and they never leave without it.
		PROBABLE	They <b>should</b> be at home, they didn't say they were leaving. They <b>may</b> be at home, they're usually there at this time of the day. They <b>could</b> be at home. Let's go check. They <b>might</b> be at home, but I don't know.
		CAN'T BE SURE	They <b>can't</b> be home, they said they'd be away this week.
	PAST	LOGICAL	I <b>must have</b> left my phone at home. I don't remember taking it. I <b>can't have</b> left my phone at home, I had it with me a moment ago. I think I <b>may have</b> left my phone at home. Let's go check.
		NOT SURE	I guess I <b>could have</b> left my phone at home, but I'm not sure. I suppose I <b>might have</b> left my phone at home before leaving.
		DID NOT HAPPEN	Luckily I found my phone, I thought it <b>could have</b> been stolen. Luckily I found my phone, though I <b>might have</b> lost it.

OBLIGATION / ADVICE / PROHIBITION	OBLIGATORY	Men <b>must</b> wear a tie to the party. You <b>have to</b> wear a tie to the party.	It's a rule. It's obligatory.
	ADVISED	You <b>must</b> wear a tie to the party. You <b>ought to</b> wear a tie to the party.	It's a strong believe. Formal request.
	OPTIONAL	You <b>should</b> wear a tie to the party. You <b>can</b> wear a tie to the party.	Recommendation. It's your choice.
	NOT ADVISED	You <b>don't have to</b> wear a tie to the party. You <b>shouldn't</b> wear a tie to the party.	It's not an obligation. It's not recommended.
	FORBIDDEN	You <b>can't</b> wear a tie to the party. Men <b>must not / musn't</b> wear a tie to the party.	It's forbidden.

PERMISSIONS AND REQUESTS	INVITATIONS	→ Would you like to come to the party?	
	ASK FOR PERMISSION	Can I borrow your car tomorrow? Could I (possibly) borrow your car tomorrow? May I borrow your car tomorrow? Would you mind if I used your car tomorrow?	Casual Politer
	OFFERS	→ Would you like anything to eat?	
	REQUESTS	Can you help me? Could you help me? Would you help me? Would you mind helping me?	Casual Politer