

Grammar | past obligation/permission

- Look at the example sentences in the Grammar box and complete the gaps with the appropriate verbs which indicate past obligation or permission.

Grammar box

- ✓ They **had to** organise their weekly project.
- ✓ We **didn't have to** pay for it.
- ✓ They **were allowed to** visit their close friends.
- ✓ They **weren't allowed to** tell anyone the secret.
- ✓ They **couldn't** take their bags with them.
- ✓ They **could** stay up to watch the Moon landing on TV.

	Present	Past
Obligation	have to/must	
No obligation	don't have to	
Permission	be allowed to can	
No permission	not be allowed to can't mustn't	

Form

have/had + verb with to
allowed + verb with to
could(n't) + verb without to



- Complete the sentences with modal verbs from the Grammar box. More than one answer may be possible.
 - ✓ Martin wasn't in the office, so I | | phone him on his mobile. (I was obliged to.)
 - ✓ When I was at school, we | | run inside the building. (It was not permitted.)
 - ✓ In my last job, we | | work from home for two days a week. (It was permitted.)
 - ✓ Luckily, we had our passports with us, so we | | go back to the hotel. (It wasn't necessary.)
 - ✓ We | | smoke in the restaurant, so we | | go outside. (It was not permitted/It was necessary.)
 - ✓ I stayed up all night, because I | | finish my assignment by today. (It was necessary.)
 - ✓ As a young child, I was | | travel alone on buses. (It was permitted.)
 - ✓ The flight was delayed, but we | | wait very long before take-off. (It wasn't necessary.)
- Correct the following sentences.
 - ✓ I wasn't be allowed to stay out late.
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 - ✓ We could to eat chocolate all day long.

✓ Did you were allowed to buy new clothes?

✓ We didn't allowed to watch television.

✓ I couldn't to use the telephone because it was too expensive.

✓ We didn't had to help with the housework.

✓ We had to studying very hard.



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Source: 1) www.wikipedia.org 2) <https://www.english-4u.de/grammar1.htm>