

# Modal verbs for advice

Functions	Examples
We use <b>SHOULD</b> to give <b>advice</b> or to say we think something is good.	You <b>shouldn't</b> bite your nails. We <b>should</b> be using only solar and wind energy. The UNO <b>should</b> expel Russia from the Security Council.
We can use <b>OUGHT TO</b> instead of <b>SHOULD</b> .	You <b>ought to</b> put more attention when you are doing your homework. They <b>ought to</b> manufacture more solar panels in Europe. We <b>oughtn't to</b> buy any more gas from Russia.
We can use <b>HAD BETTER</b> for a more insistent advice or a <b>warning</b> , especially when there is danger or a serious problem.	You <b>had better not</b> touch that wire! We'd better do something to stop climate change.
We can also use <b>MUST</b> for insistent advice.	You <b>mustn't</b> worry about the money, it is more important to get some work experience. You really <b>must</b> stop smoking, it's going to kill you.

We can add **HAVE** after **SHOULD** and **OUGHT TO** to talk about a **past** action or situation, or to express **regret** about past actions.

We **should have** taken a taxi, the bus is taking forever to come!

The electricity companies **should have** invested more on renewable energies.

They **ought to have** stopped Putin when he invaded Georgia in 1992.

I'm getting soaked! We **should have** taken an umbrella.

I **ought to have** done my homework yesterday, I'm really busy today.

## Exercises:

a) **Select ALL** the correct options to fill in each gap:

1. It's a bit cold, isn't it? I think we \_\_\_\_\_ turn the heating on.

shouldn't      ought to      mustn't      had better

2. I'm getting hungry, we \_\_\_\_\_ start cooking dinner.

should      shouldn't      must      ought to

3. Do you think we \_\_\_\_\_ buy an electric car?

ought      ought to      must      oughtn't to

4. We \_\_\_\_\_ fight climate change at all levels.

should      must      ought to      had better

5. You \_\_\_\_\_ be careful: that machine can be very dangerous if you don't know what you're doing.  
should            must            ought to            had better

b) Fill in the gaps using a suitable modal verb from the chart (when two options are correct, write one only):

should / ought to / must / had better  
shouldn't / oughtn't to / mustn't  
should have / ought to have  
shouldn't have / oughtn't to have

Remember to check the correct spelling of **mustn't**!

1. I really \_\_\_\_\_ turn off Whatsapp while I'm working, it is very distracting.
2. You \_\_\_\_\_ take a torch with you, it is totally dark in the cave.
3. You \_\_\_\_\_ lie in the sun without putting on some sunscreen lotion first.
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ plant some more trees in this park, there's very little shade to sit in.
5. If you have faith in God, you \_\_\_\_\_ worry when your plans don't come out as you intended.
6. You \_\_\_\_\_ use drugs, they can destroy your life and also your family's.
7. I \_\_\_\_\_ write more examples, but I don't have much time at the moment!