

# Modal Verbs

## Match

When I was young I **could** play the piano very well, but I'm all rusty now.

possibility

You **may** go to the party but you need to finish your homework first.

past ability

I'm allowed to go to the party, but mum said I **have to** do my homework first.

lack of ability

Wait for me! I **can't** run very fast!

permission

You **mustn't** feed the lions. It's dangerous.

prohibition

I don't want to hurt her feelings, but I **must** tell her the truth.

advice

You **shouldn't** talk so disrespectfully to your mother.

internal obligation

It **may** rain later so we'd better go shopping now.

external obligation

You **should** try the clothes on before buying them.

logical deduction

She **can't** stop yawning. She **must** be really tired.

criticism

Use the modal verbs in the box to fill in the gaps.

could - may (x2) - have to - can't - mustn't - must (x2) - shouldn't - should

- I wouldn't break up with him if I were you. I think you  have a heart-to-heart conversation first.
- He ate four sandwiches! He  be really hungry!
- You  invite a friend as long as your room is clean and tidy.
- My grandma said I  be mean to my little sister and punished me, but she started it!
- Young children  use sharp scissors under any circumstances; they could get hurt.
- I  ride a bicycle when I was a kid, but I'm afraid I can't do it now.
- I can't go out tonight. My teacher said I  turn in the assignment on Monday, so I guess I'll be working on it all weekend.
- I've already spent a fortune on clothes. I  restrain myself. I won't buy another garment until the end of the month.
- My little brother  read yet. You'll have to draw him a picture if you want him to understand.
- We  go to the party tonight but we haven't made up our minds yet. I'll let you know as soon as we've made a decision.

Now write the number of the sentence with the modal that expresses each idea.

possibility:

prohibition:

logical deduction:

past ability:

advice:

criticism:

lack of ability:

internal obligation:

permission:

external obligation: