

For general information about modals, see Unit 19.

## Obligation

Use	Modal	Example
Present or future obligation	must / mustn't have to need to	All visitors <b>must</b> turn off their mobile phones. You <b>have to/need to</b> press 'send'.
No present or future obligation	don't have to don't need to needn't	You <b>don't have to/don't need to/needn't</b> pay to send an e-mail.
Past obligation	had to	Yesterday, Sam <b>had to</b> buy more stamps.
No past obligation	didn't have to didn't need to	I learnt a little Italian, but everyone spoke English, so I <b>didn't have to/didn't need to</b> use it.

## Helpful hints

In spoken English, **have to** is more common than **must**. **Must** is often used in written notices and instructions.

✓ 'We **have to** pay the phone bill today,' Rita said.

✓ Passengers **must** turn off all mobile phones.



Mustn't and **don't have to** do not mean the same.

✓ You **mustn't** do that! (= Don't do that!)

✓ You **don't have to** do that. (= You can do that if you want to, but it's not necessary.)

## Probability and possibility

Use	Modal	Example
Present strong probability	must can't couldn't	The phone is ringing – it <b>must</b> be Simon. This letter <b>can't/couldn't</b> be from Japan because it's got a French stamp.
Present and future probability	should ought to	We <b>ought to/should</b> hear from Cheryl this weekend.
Present and future possibility	could may might	I'm not sure what language it is – it <b>could/may/might</b> be Polish.

## Helpful hints

We often use **must**, **can't** and **couldn't** for probability when we have some evidence for our opinion.

✓ I just rang Paul, but there's no answer. He **must** be out.



To talk about possibility and probability about the past, we use a modal and the perfect infinitive. See Unit 22.

**A** Choose the sentence (A, B or C) which means the same as the first sentence.

1 We have to pay the electricity bill before Friday.  
 A We can pay it if we want to.  
 B We must pay it.  
 C We've already paid it.

2 You don't need to buy me a birthday present.  
 A You must buy me a birthday present.  
 B It's not necessary to buy me a birthday present.  
 C You mustn't buy me a birthday present.

3 I have to do some work on my project this evening.  
 A I haven't got time to do the work.  
 B I've already done the work.  
 C I need to do the work.

4 Lenny didn't have to see the head teacher after all.  
 A It wasn't necessary for Lenny to see the head teacher.  
 B Lenny went to see the head teacher.  
 C Lenny is waiting to see the head teacher.

5 Students mustn't run in school buildings.  
 A They can run if they want to.  
 B Students don't like running.  
 C Running isn't allowed.

6 All passengers must fasten their seatbelts.  
 A They have to fasten their seatbelts now.  
 B They don't have to fasten their seatbelts.  
 C They can fasten their seatbelts.

7 Mr Reed had to go to the police station to answer some questions.  
 A Mr Reed was able to go to the police station.  
 B Mr Reed forgot to go to the police station.  
 C Mr Reed was obliged to go to the police station.

8 It's kind of you to offer to help, but you really don't need to.  
 A I don't want you to help me.  
 B Your help isn't necessary.  
 C You won't be able to help me.

**B** Circle the correct word or phrase.

1 'Smoking isn't allowed in the airport.'  
 You **mustn't** / **don't have to** smoke in the airport.

2 'It's not necessary to come to the train station to meet me.'  
 You **have to** / **don't have to** meet her at the train station.

3 'We were forced to wait for over two hours in the rain!'  
 They **had to** / **didn't need to** wait for over two hours in the rain.

4 'The instructions tell you to write in pencil.'  
 You **must** / **needn't** write in pencil.

5 'You can contact us by either phone or e-mail.'  
 You **mustn't** / **don't have to** phone them.

6 'In my country, you can carry your passport with you if you want, but it's not necessary.'  
 In her country, you **don't need to** / **mustn't** carry your passport with you.

7 'My grandfather was made to start work when he was just fourteen years old.'  
 He **had to** / **must** start work when he was just fourteen years old.

8 'It's not necessary to book a hotel; you can stay in our spare room.'  
 You **mustn't** / **don't have to** stay in a hotel.

**C** Complete using the correct form of **have to**. You may have to use some negative forms.

1 Jade can't come out tonight. She ..... look after her little brother.

2 I didn't have enough money, so I ..... borrow some from Yuri.

3 It's raining really hard, but luckily we ..... go out this evening.

4 To start the laptop you ..... press the power button.

5 Robbie worked last weekend, but I .....

6 ..... you ..... go to piano lessons when you were younger?

**D** Match the sentences with the explanations. You have to use some of the explanations more than once.

- 1 'Someone is at the door. It must be Mrs Johnson from next door.'
- 2 'Lena might not know where the cinema is.'
- 3 'Dad should know what the capital of New Zealand is.'
- 4 'Greg can't be in the final! He's a terrible player!'
- 5 'The dog is wet. It must be raining outside.'
- 6 'We may go to the Canary Islands for Easter.'
- 7 'Ken must like that film. He's seen it six times!'
- 8 'Barry ought to be able to cook Chinese food. He lived there for two years.'

- A I'm almost certain.
- B It's probable.
- C Maybe / Perhaps.

**E** Rewrite the sentences using the words given.

- 1 You're expecting David to ring. The phone rings. **must**
- 2 Anna is a better runner than Rula. You think Anna will probably win the race tomorrow. **should**
- 3 A letter arrives. It's possible that it's from your cousin, Janice. **could**
- 4 There's a knock at the door. Your mum says it might be Colin, but you know Colin is on holiday. **can't**
- 5 You see someone wearing a costume. You think there's a strong probability that she's going to a fancy-dress party. **must**
- 6 Your sister is looking for her hairbrush. You think it's possible that it's in the living room. **might**
- 7 You're waiting for Harriet to arrive. You think she'll probably be there in half an hour. **should**
- 8 You're talking about why James seems to be sad. You think it's possible he's in trouble at school. **could**