

For general information about modals, see Unit 19.

## Obligation

Use	Modal	Example
Present or future obligation	<i>must / mustn't have to need to</i>	All visitors <b>must</b> turn off their mobile phones. You <b>have to/need to</b> press 'send'.
No present or future obligation	<i>don't have to don't need to needn't</i>	You <b>don't have to/don't need to/needn't</b> pay to send an e-mail.
Past obligation	<i>had to</i>	Yesterday, Sam <b>had to</b> buy more stamps.
No past obligation	<i>didn't have to didn't need to</i>	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	<i>must can't couldn't</i>	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	<i>should ought to</i>	We <b>ought to/should</b> hear from Cheryl this weekend.
Present and future possibility	<i>could may might</i>	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.

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| <p>1 We have to pay the electricity bill before Friday.<br/>A We can pay it if we want to.<br/>B We must pay it.<br/>C We've already paid it.</p> <p>2 You don't need to buy me a birthday present.<br/>A You must buy me a birthday present.<br/>B It's not necessary to buy me a birthday present.<br/>C You mustn't buy me a birthday present.</p> <p>3 I have to do some work on my project this evening.<br/>A I haven't got time to do the work.<br/>B I've already done the work.<br/>C I need to do the work.</p> <p>4 Lenny didn't have to see the head teacher after all.<br/>A It wasn't necessary for Lenny to see the head teacher.<br/>B Lenny went to see the head teacher.<br/>C Lenny is waiting to see the head teacher.</p> | <p>5 Students mustn't run in school buildings.<br/>A They can run if they want to.<br/>B Students don't like running.<br/>C Running isn't allowed.</p> <p>6 All passengers must fasten their seatbelts.<br/>A They have to fasten their seatbelts now.<br/>B They don't have to fasten their seatbelts.<br/>C They can fasten their seatbelts.</p> <p>7 Mr Reed had to go to the police station to answer some questions.<br/>A Mr Reed was able to go to the police station.<br/>B Mr Reed forgot to go to the police station.<br/>C Mr Reed was obliged to go to the police station.</p> <p>8 It's kind of you to offer to help, but you really don't need to.<br/>A I don't want you to help me.<br/>B Your help isn't necessary.<br/>C You won't be able to help me.</p> |
|--|--|

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1 'Smoking isn't allowed in the airport.'<br/>You <b>mustn't</b> / <b>don't have to</b> smoke in the airport.</p> <p>2 'It's not necessary to come to the train station to meet me.'<br/>You <b>have to</b> / <b>don't have to</b> meet her at the train station.</p> <p>3 'We were forced to wait for over two hours in the rain.'<br/>They <b>had to</b> / <b>didn't need to</b> wait for over two hours in the rain.</p> <p>4 'The instructions tell you to write in pencil.'<br/>You <b>must</b> / <b>needn't</b> write in pencil.</p> | <p>5 'You can contact us by either phone or e-mail.'<br/>You <b>mustn't</b> / <b>don't have to</b> phone them.</p> <p>6 'In my country, you can carry your passport with you if you want, but it's not necessary.'<br/>In her country, you <b>don't need to</b> / <b>mustn't</b> carry your passport with you.</p> <p>7 'My grandfather was made to start work when he was just fourteen years old.'<br/>He <b>had to</b> / <b>must</b> start work when he was just fourteen years old.</p> <p>8 'It's not necessary to book a hotel; you can stay in our spare room.'<br/>You <b>mustn't</b> / <b>don't have to</b> stay in a hotel.</p> |
|---|---|

**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**  
 .....