

Are Free Trials Really **FREE?**

Read the following article. Pay special attention to the words in bold. **T** 8.3

You're surfing the Internet¹ and see an offer for a free trial for a product or service. It **might** be an offer for free magazines. Or it **may** be a subscription² to a music app. You **may** already have a free music app, but you **have to listen** to a lot of ads. With a paid service, you **don't have to listen** to ads. You **can** even **download** music and **listen** to it offline.

Should you **accept** the offer? If it's free, what **can** you **lose**? Try it. You **might** like it. Right? Well, it **might not** be such a good deal after all. Why not?

First, you **have to** give the company your email address. The company **might sell** your email address to other companies. You **may start** to get a lot of unwanted ads.

Second, it's easy to start a free trial, but it's hard to **cancel**³ the service when the trial period is over. You call the phone number on the website (if you **can find it**!), and someone tells you, "You **can't cancel** by phone. You **have to cancel** online."

Why **must** they **make** it so hard to cancel? Think



COMPREHENSION Based on the reading, write T for *true* or F for *false*.

- _____ A paid subscription to a music app gives you service without ads.
- _____ It is sometimes hard for you to cancel a free trial.
- _____ Online companies can make money when they have your email address.

THINK ABOUT IT Discuss the questions with a partner or in a small group.

- Did you ever accept a free trial? If yes, describe your experience. If not, why not?
- Do you think free trials are a good business strategy? Explain.

8.7 Modals and Phrasal Modals—Overview

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
You can start a free trial easily. You should read the cancellation policy.	The base form of the verb follows a modal. Don't use an infinitive after a modal.
The free trial might not be a good idea. You cannot cancel this subscription online.	To form the negative, we put <i>not</i> after the modal. We write the negative of <i>can</i> as one word: <i>cannot</i> .
I can't find the phone number on the website. You shouldn't use a debit card for an online purchase.	We can form a contraction for <i>cannot</i> (<i>can't</i>), <i>should not</i> (<i>shouldn't</i>), <i>must not</i> (<i>mustn't</i>), and <i>would not</i> (<i>wouldn't</i>). There is no contraction for <i>may not</i> and <i>might not</i> .

Note:

Notice these patterns with a modal:

AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENT:	<i>We can cancel online.</i>
NEGATIVE STATEMENT:	<i>We can't cancel by phone.</i>
YES/NO QUESTION:	<i>Can we cancel by email?</i>
SHORT ANSWER:	<i>No, you can't.</i>
WH- QUESTION:	<i>How can we cancel?</i>
NEGATIVE WH- QUESTION:	<i>Why can't we cancel by phone?</i>
SUBJECT WH- QUESTION:	<i>Who can cancel this?</i>

Phrasal modals also take the base form of a verb.

PHRASAL MODAL	EXAMPLES
have to	You have to cancel by Friday.
be able to	I am not able to understand the cancellation policy.
be allowed to	The company is allowed to sell your email address.

EXERCISE 9 Listen to the report. Then write T for *true*, F for *false*, or NS for *not stated*.  8.4

- _____ You can't use a coupon on a sale item.
- _____ Stores usually have a limit on the number of items you can buy at a special price.
- _____ A rain check lets customers buy products at the sale price before the sale starts.

EXERCISE 10 Listen again. Fill in the blanks with the words you hear.  8.4

Manufacturers often send coupons to shoppers to encourage them to buy a new product. If you receive a coupon for a new kind of toothpaste, you _____ want to try it. Coupons have an expiration date. You _____ pay attention to this date because you _____ use the coupon after this date.

Stores have weekly specials, but there's usually a limit. You _____ buy more than the limit. If you see a sign that says, "3 for \$5," you _____ buy three items to get the special price. You _____ buy just one or two.

What _____ you do if a store has a special, but you _____ find the item on the shelf? If the item is sold out, you _____ go to the customer service desk and ask for a "rain check." A rain check allows you to buy this item at the sale price even after the sale is over. A rain check has an expiration date. You _____ use the rain check by this date.

If you see a sign that says "rebate," this means that you _____ get money back from the manufacturer. You _____ mail the receipt to the manufacturer. Also, you _____ fill out a small form. It _____ take 6 to 8 weeks to get your money. You _____ keep a copy of the receipt.

8.8 Can, Be Able To, Be Allowed To

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
Can you find the phone number of this website? I'm not able to find the phone number.	We use <i>can</i> or <i>be able to</i> for ability.
The offer says "free trial." What can I lose ? Free trials can sometimes cost money.	We use <i>can</i> for possibility.
Can I download music for free? Are we allowed to sample the food? The sign for this item says "Limit two." You can't buy more than that.	We use <i>can</i> or <i>be allowed to</i> for permission. The negative shows prohibition.

Pronunciation Notes:

1. We usually pronounce *can* as /kən/.

I can go tomorrow. (/kən/)

2. We usually pronounce *can't* as /kænt/. The stress is stronger than in *can*. Sometimes it is hard to hear the *t* in *can't*. The vowel sound and the word stress help us hear the difference between *can* and *can't*.

I can go today. (/kæn/)

I can't go today. (/kænt/)

3. In a short answer, we pronounce *can* as /kæn/ and *can't* as /kænt/.

Can you help me? Yes, I can. (/kæn/)

Can I pay by check? No, you can't. (/kænt/)

GRAMMAR IN USE

In informal and everyday speech, we use *can* / to ask permission.

Can I come in?

In formal situations, we use *may* /.

May I come in?

ABOUT YOU These statements are true for most U.S. supermarkets. Check (✓) the ones that are true for supermarkets in your country. Then find a partner and discuss your answers.

- _____ You can use coupons.
- _____ You can sometimes buy two items for the price of one.
- _____ You can get a rain check.
- _____ You're allowed to pay with a check.
- _____ You're allowed to return an item if you're not happy with it.
- _____ Small children can sit in a shopping cart.
- _____ If you have a small number of items, you can go to a special checkout lane.
- _____ You can ask someone to help you take your bags to your car.
- _____ You're sometimes able to get free samples.

EXERCISE 11 Complete the conversation between two friends. Fill in the blanks with the phrases from the box.

'm not able to finish	can give	can say
're not allowed to apply	can help ✓	can't wait

A: I need some help with this website.

B: I can help 1. you. What's the problem?

A: I 2. the registration for this free trial. It's for a magazine. It's a sports magazine, and I love sports.

B: I have a subscription to this magazine. I 3. you my magazine in about a week.

A: I 4. a week. The sports news will be old.

B: OK. Let me see what we need to do. Oh, I see the problem. You 5. for this offer. It says that it's only for people over the age of 18. You're 17, right?

A: I 6. that I'm 18.

B: I don't think that's a good idea.

8.9 Should

We use *should* for advice.

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
You should compare prices before you buy.	<i>should</i> = It's a good idea.
You shouldn't buy things you don't need.	<i>shouldn't</i> = It's not a good idea.

ABOUT YOU If someone from another country is going to live in the United States, what advice would you give him or her about shopping? Work with a partner to write sentences of advice. Use *should*.

1. You should shop for summer clothes in July and August. Summer clothes are cheapest at that time.

2. _____

3. _____

EXERCISE 12 Complete the conversation between a husband and wife at the supermarket. Fill in the blanks with the phrases from the box.

shouldn't buy	should use	shouldn't eat	should look at	should take
should be	should we buy ✓	should come	should we pay	should bring

A: Should we buy **1.** ice cream? It's on sale.

B: It's a hot day. And we have to stop at the post office before we go home.

We **2.** it today. It'll melt.

A: How about candy for the kids? They always ask us for candy.

B: That's not a good idea. They **3.** so much candy. Where's our shopping list? We **4.** our list and not buy things we don't need. We **5.** careful about how we spend our money.

A: You're right. OK. Milk is on our list.

B: You **6.** the expiration date. This milk carton has tomorrow's date. You **7.** milk from the back row. It's usually fresher.

A: Really?

B: You almost never come shopping with me. You **8.** with me more often. You can learn to be a better shopper.

A: You're right. Look. That sign says, "Bring your own bags. Get 10¢ for each bag." Next time, we **9.** our own bags. You see? I'm learning.

B: Great. **10.** with a credit card or use cash?

A: I've got enough cash. Let's use cash.

8.10 Must and Have To

We use *must* and *have to* for necessity.

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
You must cancel your free trial by Friday. To get a rebate, you must send the receipt.	<i>Must</i> has a very official, formal tone.
When you sign up for a free trial, you have to use your credit card or debit card.	<i>Have to</i> is less formal than <i>must</i> .

GRAMMAR IN USE

Another common way to express necessity is with *have got to*. This is much more common in speaking than *must*. We usually contract a pronoun with *have* or *has*. We often pronounce *got to* as /gətə/.

I've got to cancel this trial by January 10.

She's got to pay by credit card.

EXERCISE 13

Fill in the blanks with the phrases from the box.

has to go	must show	have to return ✓
must send	have to buy	have to use

1. Eggs are on sale for \$2.19 a dozen, "Limit two." I have three cartons of eggs. I have to return one of the cartons.
2. I have a coupon for cereal. The expiration date is tomorrow. I _____ it by tomorrow, or I won't get the discount.
3. The coupon for cereal says "Buy 2, get 50¢ off." Do I _____ two in order to get the discount?
4. She has a rebate application. She _____ the receipt to the manufacturer.
5. He wants to pay by check. The cashier asks for his driver's license. He _____ his driver's license.
6. She has 26 items in her shopping cart. She can't go to a lane that says "10 items or fewer." She _____ to another lane.

8.11 Not Have To and Must Not

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
To get a rebate, you must mail in a receipt. To get a rebate, you have to mail in a receipt.	In affirmative statements, <i>have to</i> and <i>must</i> are very similar in meaning. <i>Must</i> is more formal.
Stores must not sell an item after the expiration date.	In negative statements, <i>must not</i> shows that something is prohibited.
I usually shop online. I don't have to go into a store.	<i>Don't have to</i> shows that something is not necessary.

Note:

Must not is very formal. Informally, we use *can't*.

Stores can't sell an item after the expiration date.

EXERCISE 14 Fill in the blanks with the correct verbs from the box. You can use some verbs more than once.

buy	carry	go	pay	take	bring
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1. If you sample a product, you don't have to buy it. But if you decide to buy it, you will usually get a coupon.
2. If you have just a few items, you don't have to take a shopping cart. You can use a basket.
3. At some supermarkets, you don't have to carry your bags home yourself. Someone from the supermarket will deliver them to your home.
4. I don't have to go to the store to get information on a product. I can get most information on my phone.
5. When you're leaving a supermarket, you don't have to bring your bags to your car. A sales assistant can do it for you.
6. I don't have to pay with cash. I can use my credit card.
7. I don't have to take into a store to buy electronics. But I have to shop in a store for certain items, like a car.

8.12 *May, Might, and Will*

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
A free trial may cost a lot of money. I have a coupon for a new toothpaste, so I might try it.	<i>May</i> and <i>might</i> have the same meaning. They show possibility for the future.
If you're a careful shopper, you will save money.	<i>Will</i> shows certainty about the future.

Note:

Compare the adverb *maybe* with *may* or *might* modals.

Maybe my friend **will buy** a new tablet.

My friend **may buy** a new tablet.

My friend **might buy** a new tablet.

EXERCISE 15 Fill in the blanks with the phrases from the box. More than one answer may be possible.

will get	might want ✓	will receive
might not be	may be	may try

1. Meg needs to go shopping. She's not sure what her kids want. They might want to try a new kind of cereal.
2. She's not sure if she should buy the small or the large size of cereal. The large size _____ cheaper.
3. The store sold out of all the coffee that was on sale. The clerk said, "We _____ more tomorrow."
4. The milk has an expiration date of June 27. Today is June 27. She's not going to buy the milk because it _____ good.
5. She's not sure what kind of toothpaste she should buy. She might buy the one she usually buys, or she _____ a new kind.
6. If she requests rebates through an app today, she _____ money back in 48 hours.

EXERCISE 16 Complete each statement. Write what *may* or *might* happen. Use *will* if you think the result is certain. Find a partner and compare your answers.

1. If you shop online, you might find a better price.
2. If you go into a store and talk to a salesperson, _____.
3. If you buy shoes online, _____.
4. If you try a free sample in a supermarket, _____.
5. If you bring your own bags to a supermarket, _____.
6. If you don't cancel a free trial on time, _____.