

Modals of obligation

→ **must and have to**

We use **must** when we make the rules:

*I **must get** a good night's sleep tonight.*

We use **have to** when we talk about other people's rules:

*You **have to buy** a ticket before you get on the train.*

There is no past or future form of **must**. When we talk about rules in the past or future, we always use the correct form of **have to**:

*When you go to India, you'll **have to** get a visa.*

*I **had to** wear a uniform at school.*



Tip

Don't use contractions with **have to**:

I have to go. NOT *I've to go.*



Tip

- Often there is not much difference in meaning between **must** or **have to**. **Have to** is much more common than **must**, especially in spoken English.
- **have got to** is also used in spoken English and means the same as **have to**.
- Questions with **must** are very rare.

→ **mustn't, can't and don't have to**

We use **mustn't** or **can't** to say that something is not allowed.

We often use **mustn't** when we make the rules and **can't** to talk about other people's rules:

*I **mustn't** forget to email my mum.*

*We **can't** cross the road yet – the light's still red.*

For things which were not allowed in the past, use **couldn't**:

*I **couldn't** work in India because I only had a tourist visa.*

We use **don't have to** when there is no obligation. It means it's not necessary to do something:

*University students **don't have to** wear a uniform.*

*I **didn't have to** call a taxi. Robert drove me home.*

→ **should and ought to**

We use **should** or **ought to** to give advice and recommendations. They have the same meaning, but **should** is much more common:

*We **should see** as much as possible. We **shouldn't** waste time.*

*We **ought to see** as much as possible. We **ought not to** waste time.*



1 GRAMMAR Modals of obligation

a Underline the correct words to complete the conversation.

- PAUL** I've got my English exam tomorrow morning.
- MUM** Oh, really? So what time do you ¹*should / have to / must* be at school?
- PAUL** Well, the exam starts at 9 o'clock, so I ²*mustn't / don't have to / can* be late.
- MUM** I think you ³*shouldn't / mustn't / ought to* leave earlier than normal, in case there's a lot of traffic.
- PAUL** Yes, that's a good idea.
- MUM** And what are you going to do after the exam?
- PAUL** Well, I ⁴*mustn't / shouldn't / don't have to* stay at school in the afternoon, so I ⁵*can / should / must* come home for lunch.
- MUM** Fine, just two more things. It says on this information sheet that students ⁶*can / must / shouldn't* show their identity cards to the examiner before the exam.
- PAUL** Don't worry. I always take my ID card with me to school.
- MUM** It also says you ⁷*don't have to / must / can't* use a dictionary during the exam, so don't take one with you.
- PAUL** Yes, I know. I'll leave it at home.
- MUM** OK, good. By the way, it's 10 o'clock. You ⁸*shouldn't / have to / must* go to bed late tonight.
- PAUL** No, you're right. I'll go up now.
- MUM** OK, good night. And good luck for tomorrow!