

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 must turn off their mobile phones. You have to/need to press 'send'.
No present or future obligation	<i>don't have to don't need to needn't</i>	You don't have to/don't need to/needn't pay to send an e-mail.
Past obligation	<i>had to</i>	Yesterday, Sam had to 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 didn't have to/didn't need to 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 must be Simon. This letter can't/couldn't be from Japan because it's got a French stamp.
Present and future probability	<i>should ought to</i>	We ought to/should hear from Cheryl this weekend.
Present and future possibility	<i>could may might</i>	I'm not sure what language it is – it could/may/might 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.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
|--|--|

B Circle the correct word or phrase.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 'Smoking isn't allowed in the airport.'
You mustn't / don't have to smoke in the airport.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>4 'The instructions tell you to write in pencil.'
You must / needn't write in pencil.</p> | <p>5 'You can contact us by either phone or e-mail.'
You mustn't / don't have to phone them.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</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
- 6you 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**
.....