

Modals– Part 1

Cómo atender una llamada en inglés

Structure

Modals: Introduction

What are modal verbs?

Modals Ability

Can vs Could vs Able to

Modals: Usage

When and how to use modals

Modals: Deduction

May, Might, Must

Modals

Traditional vs Quasi

Relationship Idioms

Useful Vocabulary &
Expressions

Modal Verbs

Confusing verbs to English learners



Modals (also called modal verbs, modal auxiliary verbs, modal auxiliaries) are special verbs that behave irregularly in English.

They are different from normal verbs like for example: work, play, visit..

They give additional information about the **function** of the main verb that follows it. They have a great variety of **communicative functions**.

Modal verbs

What?

Modal Verbs



When?

Probability:	His parents must be so proud.
Possibility:	Judging by the weather, it might rain today.
Ability:	She can speak 3 languages fluently.
Permission:	Could I go to the bathroom?
Request:	Would you close the window?
Suggestion:	You should try Spanish ham.
Obligation:	You must wash your hands before cutting the vegetables.

These are the most common.

Using modal verbs in a sentence is simple. For the present simple we use these rules

1. Modal verbs go before the main verb (except for questions)
2. Modal verbs always go with the bare infinitive.

e.g. I can speak English well!

Can she speak English well?

Modal Verbs

How?

Modal Verbs



Other present tenses

Present continuous

After the modal verb, use the word *be* followed by the *-ing* form of the main verb.

e.g. *I should be going.*

Present perfect continuous

You can add a modal verb before a verb in the present perfect continuous tense without changing much. However, when using a modal verb, you must always use “have,” never “had,” even if the subject is third-person.

modal verb + *have been* + verb in *-ing* form

e.g. *She must have been sleeping.*

Modal Verbs

Past tenses

Past tenses and present perfect

2 modal verbs in particular have a simple past tense: **can** and **will**.

If you want to use either of those in any of the past tenses, you must first conjugate them into their past tense form:

Can -> could

Will -> would

None of the modal verbs can be used in the past perfect or the past perfect continuous

Modal Verbs



There are 9 accepted modal verbs in English. Remember that some modal verbs can have a double meaning.

1. Shall
2. Should
3. Can
4. Could
5. May
6. Might
7. Must
8. Will
9. Would

Similar to modals verbs, quasi-modal verbs are common auxiliary verbs in the English language that express modality, which is the expression of subjective attitudes and opinions including possibility, necessity, and contingency. Also referred to as semi-modal verbs, the four quasi-modal verbs in English are:

- Ought to
 - Need to
 - Has to
 - Had better
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Quasi-Modals

Explained



Modal Verbs

- Obligation
- Advice or Suggestion
- **Probability**
- **Ability & Permission**

Ability & Permission



Can

Can I take the file home?

I can speak three languages.

I can't see him

Able to

I'm sorry, I'm not able to respond.

Is he able to read the text?

We're not able to finish on time

The past of can = could

I can't see very well

I can speak English

I am able work at night

I couldn't see very well

My grandfather could speak German

I was able to finish my work early

Ability & Permission

In the past

Can vs Could?

To avoid using Spanglish, remember the following:

1. Can and could are most common.
2. Can and could are only used in the past and present.
3. Could is used for general ability and able to is used for specific ability.

Remember that could has many translations!

To be able, can & could



Translations

PHRASE	SIGNIFICADO
We can see the mountain from our window.	Podemos ver la montaña desde nuestra Ventana.
They were able to evacuate the building in time.	Pudieron evacuar el edificio a tiempo.
Have they been able to contact Brian?	¿Han podido contactar con Brian?
How many languages can she speak?	¿Cuántos idiomas puede hablar ella?
They couldn't sell alcohol after 11pm	No podían vender alcohol después de las once.
We couldn't see well at the cinema	No veíamos bien en el cine.
The doctor was able to save the patient.	El doctor pudo salvar al paciente.
You should be able to set up the Ikea table	Deberíais poder montar la mesa de Ikea.

Probability

Probable

Must – 90 %

Could – 60%

May / Might – 50%

Improbable

Must not – 10%

Couldn't – 5%

Can't – 1%

Must

Must means that there is a very high probability

These kids look a lot alike and they are close. They must be siblings.

It's a logical conclusion.





May or Might?



May or might express 50% probability.

It's October 12. Brian isn't at home. He might be at the movies. He may be at home.

May = might except in reported speech, when we only use 'might'

Must not

We use must not when there isn't much probability = 10%

Notice the difference between “must not” and “mustn't”

You mustn't exercise
Prohibition



You must not exercise
Logical conclusion



The past = modal verb + have + past participle

I must be crazy.

I must have been crazy.

You could have a fever.

You could have had a fever.

He may arrive late.

He might have arrived late.

Probability

In the past

Probability



Translations

SIGNIFICADO	PHRASE
Puede que tengas razón.	You may/might be right.
Ese hombre debe de ser mayor.	That man must be old.
No deben de tener mucho dinero.	They must not have a lot of money.
No puede ser.	It can't be.
Debéis de estar cansados.	You must be tired.
El no debe de trabajar mucho.	He must not work very much.
Puede que haya una toalla.	There might be a towel.
Puede que ella no lo sepa.	She may/might not know.

Relationships

Vocabulary & Idioms



Idiomatic Expressions

- A. To bury the hatchet can be difficult if you can't find common ground
 - B. The awards dinner gave me the opportunity rub shoulders with notable people in my industry
 - C. My boss breathing down my neck makes me feel like he doesn't trust me
 - D. They have been attached at the hip since working on the UK project last year.
 - E. Brian and I go back years
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Idiomatic Expressions



Through thick and thin

During the good times and the bad times.

E.g. My best friend has been there through thick and thin.

Be an item

To be romantically involved

E.g. Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie were an item for a long time

Relationship Phrasal Verbs



Fall out

To have a fight with someone

Back off

To give someone space

Fall for

To be romantically interested in someone

Hit it off

To immediately like someone

Get on/along well

To have a good relationship with someone

Make up

To end a fight

Relationship Phrasal Verbs



Have a fling

To have a short intense relationship with someone

Break up

To end a relationship

To tie the knot

To get married

To ask someone out

To ask if they want to go on a date with you

Chat up

To have a casual conversation with someone in order to get to know them better

Make out

To kiss romantically

Thanks!

Does anyone have any questions?