

Modals

What are modal verbs?

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 “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.

Modals are special verbs. They are a type of auxiliary verb. We use them to show or indicate the possibility, certainty, permission, ability, and probability. Modals can take various forms.

Definition of Modals: Modals are special verbs that are different from normal verbs. They are never used alone and are always followed by a principal verb.

They provide additional information about the principal verb. They are used to express certainty, possibility, willingness, obligation, necessity and ability.

The List of the Modals with their Positive and Negative forms is given below:

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Will	Will not
Would	Would not
Shall	Shall not
Should	Should not
May	May not
Might	Might not
Can	Cannot
Could	Could not
Must	Must not
Have to	Have not to
Need	Need not
Ought	Ought not to
Dare	Dare not
Used to	Used not to

Uses of Modal 'Will'

- (1) The first rule for the use of Modal 'will' is that it expresses pure future with second and third person as subjects.
- (2) The second rule for use of Modal 'will' is that it shows willingness, intention, promise, determination with the first person as a subject.
- (3) The third and last use of Modal 'will' is that it tells about the characteristic, habit, assumption, invitation or request and insistence.

Examples of Modal 'Will' are given below:

- (1) You will die of a heart attack. (Pure Future)
- (2) The prime minister will hoist the flag. (Pure Future)
- (3) I will meet you again. (Promise)
- (4) I will need your help. (Willingness/ intention)
- (5) He will achieve his goals. (Determination)
- (6) A child will usually obey his parents. (Characteristic habit)
- (7) He will be here at any moment. (Assumption)
- (8) Will you go with me. (Request)
- (9) He will not listen to his teacher's advice. (Insistence)

Uses of Modal 'Would'

The rule for the use of Modal 'would' is that it expresses past habits, polite request, wish/ preference or an imaginary condition.

Examples of Modal 'Would' are given below:

- (1) He would wake up early in the morning and go to work. (Past habits)
- (2) My mother would always make me my favorite dishes. (Past habits)
- (3) Would you get me a glass of water, please? (Polite request)
- (4) I would like to see the owner. (Polite request)
- (5) I wish you would be here. (Wish)
- (6) I would rather have food at home than outside. (Preference)
- (7) I would buy a house if I won the lottery. (Preference)

Uses of Modal 'Shall'

- (1) The first rule for the use of Modal 'Shall' is that it expresses pure future with the first person as the subject.
- (2) The second rule for the use of Modal 'Shall' is that it is used to ask for advice, suggestions, requests, etc. with the first person in the interrogative.
- (3) The third rule for the use of Modal 'Shall' is that it is used to express command, threat, warning, promise, assurance, determination, etc. with the second and third person as the subjects.

Examples of Modal 'Shall' are given below:

- (1) We shall go to school tomorrow. (Pure Future)
- (2) I shall teach you to dance. (Pure Future)
- (3) Shall I bring a glass of fresh juice for you? (Request)
- (4) Shall I close the door? (Advice)
- (5) Shall we go to the market tomorrow? (Suggestion)
- (6) You shall get a reward for your achievement. (Promise/ Assurance)
- (7) You shall go to your room. (Command)
- (8) They shall win the match. (Determination)

Uses of Modal 'Should'

- (1) The first rule for the use of Modal 'Should' is that it is used to express duty, obligation, advisability or desirability.
- (2) The second rule for the use of Modal 'Should' is that it is used to express logical interference, supposition, assumption, possibility or probability.
- (3) The third rule for the use of Modal 'Should' is that it is used to express a purpose after 'lest'.

Examples of Modal 'Should' are given below:

- (1) We should go to school every day. (Duty)
- (2) You should not be late for work. (Obligation/ Desirability)
- (3) You should exercise more often. (advisability)
- (4) He should be at the office by now. (Possibility)
- (5) If he should see me there, he will be happy. (Probable Condition)
- (6) Leave on time, lest you should miss the train. (should after lest)

Uses of Modal 'May'

The rule for the use of Modal

The rule for the use of Modal 'May' is that it is used to express possibility, permission, wish, faith, hope or a purpose.

Examples of Modal 'May' are given below:

- (1) It may snow in the evening. (Possibility)
- (2) May I go now, sir? (Permission)
- (3) May God always be with you. (Wish, faith or hope)
- (4) He is working hard so that he may get an appraisal. (Purpose)

Uses of Modal 'Might'

The rule for the use of Modal 'Might' is that it is used to express less possibility, permission or a guess.

Example of Modal Might are given below:

- (1) It might rain today. (Less possibility)
- (2) Might I go to get the files? (Permission)

- (3) That might be the new guard. (Guess)

Uses of Modal 'Can'

The rule for the use of Modal 'Can' is that it is used to express permission, possibility, ability or capacity.

Examples of Modal 'Can' are given below:

- (1) Can I go to the market? (Permission)
- (2) Anyone can be the thief. (Possibility)
- (3) He can stay awake for 2 days. (Ability/ Capacity)

Uses of Modal 'Could'

The rule for the use of Modal 'Could' is that it is used to express ability or capacity in the past, polite request or a possibility under certain circumstances.

Examples of Modal 'Could' are given below:

- (1) He could run very fast in his youth. (Ability/ Capacity in the past)
- (2) Could you wait for him? (Polite request)
- (3) If we had money, we could have bought a house. (Possibility under certain conditions)

Uses of Modal 'Must'

The rule for use of Modal 'Must' is that it is used to express obligation/ duty, necessity, compulsion, prohibition, emphatic advice, determination, assumption, conclusion/ interference, certainty/ strong probability.

Examples of Modal 'Must' are given below:

- (1) The children must obey their parents. (Duty)
- (2) We must not steal money from anyone. (Duty)
- (3) You must follow the orders of your boss. (Obligation)
- (4) I must reach work on time. (Necessity)
- (5) He must do as I say. (Compulsion)
- (6) You must not smoke in public places. (Prohibition)
- (7) You must see a dentist at once. (Emphatic advice)
- (8) We must not go before they come back. (Determination)
- (9) The students must be in their classes at this time. (Strong Probability)
- (10) He must be 40 years old. (Assumption)
- (11) He must have left by now. (Certainty)

Uses of Modal 'Have to'

The rule for the use of Modal 'Have to' is that it is used in the sense of must, to give advice or to recommend something.

Examples of Modal 'Have to' are given below:

- (1) I have to reach there by 9:30 pm. (in the sense of Must)
- (2) You have to start working soon. (Advice)

Uses of Modal 'Need'

The main rule for the use of Modal 'Need' is that it chiefly shows the absence of necessity or compulsion in the negative and interrogative sentences.

Examples of the Modal Need are given below:

- (1) You need not worry about work.
- (2) Need I talk to her.

Uses of Modal 'Ought'

The rule for the use of Modal 'Will' is that it is used to express the subjects obligation or duty and also it is used to give advice.

Examples of Modal 'Ought' to be given below:

- (1) I ought to love my parents. (Obligation/ Duty)
- (2) We ought not to cheat anyone. (Duty)

- (3) You ought to practice for more than 2 hours a day if you want to clear the exam.

Uses of Modal 'Dare'

The rule for using the Modal 'Dare' is that it is used at places where we need to show courage. It is generally used in negative and interrogative.

Examples of Modal Dare are given below:

- (1) I dare not fail in my exams. (Negative)
(2) How dare you interrupt us? (Interrogative)

Uses of Modal 'Used to'

The rule for the usage of Modal 'Used to' is that it is used to express past habits and to express the existence of something in the past.

Examples of the Modal 'Used to' are given below:

- (1) I used to go swimming every morning. (Past Habits)
(2) There used to be a door at this place long ago. (Existence of something in the past)

Exercise

1. She expects that her son.....
(a) can return (b) may return
(c) should return (d) could return
2. It is possible Marlowe plays for Shakespeare.
(a) may write (b) might have written
(c) might write (d) None of these
3. All felt that he..... a cheat.
(a) may be (b) can be
(c) might be (d) will be
4. I go out? asked her son.
(a) Should (b) May
(c) must (d) Could
5. "Yes, you..... ", the mother answered.
(a) should go (b) may go
(c) must go (d) shall go
6.our king live long!
(a) may (b) must
(c) Should (d) Will
7. We eat so that we live.
(a) may (b) might
(c) can (d) could
8. He went there so that he borrow money.
(a) may (b) can
(c) might (d) should
9. She advised that I curtail expenditure.
(a) should (b) shall
(c) should have (d) Could
10. We enjoyed the movie, you there.
(a) should have been (b) can be
(c) should be (d) None of these

11.you work hard, you will pass.
 (a) Would (b) Will
 (c) Should (d) Shall
12. I told him that I leave next day.
 (a) Should (b) should have
 (c) could (d) ought to
13. Make haste lest you late.
 (a) should get (b) should not get
 (c) may not got (d) shall got
14. She..... work hard if she wants to top the merit list.
 (a) must have (b) must
 (c) must not (d) would
15. She alone as it was raining heavily.
 (a) must not leave (b) must not have left
 (c) should not leave (d) None of these
16. There..... something wrong with the cooker today.
 (a) must be (b) should have been
 (c) must have been (d) could have been
17. Swati is gentle, her sister it.
 (a) should have done (b) must have done
 (c) should do (d) None of these
18. You..... obey your parents.
 (a) should (b) ought to
 (c) must (d) need not
19. You stood by your sister, when she was in difficulties.
 (a) ought to (b) ought to have
 (c) should have (d) None of these
20. She told me that she English fluently and was very happy.
 (a) could speak (b) could have spoken
 (c) can speak (d) will speak

Fill in the blanks with suitable alternatives.

What would you do if you see someone whose clothes have caught fire? You (Q21) go near him. You (Q22) tell him to roll on the ground immediately. It (Q23) put the fire out. The burnt clothes must be removed quickly and the injured area should be bathed in cold water. Great care (Q24) be taken while you wash the patient's injury. Dry it with a soft towel as gently as you (Q25) If there is any antibiotic burn cream, you (Q26) gently apply it on the wound. By this time someone (Q27) have made arrangement to take the patient to a doctor. The doctor (Q28) ask the patient to take a tetanus injection.

21.
 (a) would not (b) must not
 (c) will not (d) cannot

22. (a) should (b) can
(c) will (d) could
23. (a) can (b) would
(c) may (d) should
24. (a) shall (b) will
(c) treed (d) must
25. (a) will (b) shall
(c) can (d) would
26. (a) should (b) might
(c) must (d) can
27. (a) may (b) would
(c) can (d) might
28. (a) will (b) shall
(c) may (d) should
29. It is a rule and you _____ obey it strictly.
(a) should (b) could
(c) must (d) need to
30. _____ you like (to have) some water?
(a) Do (b) Shall
(c) Can (d) Would
31. _____ I come in?
(a) May (b) Will
(c) Can (d) Should
32. _____ you play with us?
(a) May (b) Will
(c) Shall (d) Can
33. I _____ swim across the river when I was young.
(a) could (b) can
(c) Should (d) must
34. It _____ not surprise you if you were eyed coldly by the conductor.
(a) should (b) shall
(c) will (d) would
35. They _____ be sorry for their behavior.
(a) need not (b) ought to
(c) should (d) must

36. If you read newspapers, you _____ notice that there is definite space for letters.
 (a) would (b) could
 (c) will (d) can
37. If you had not been there, I _____ differently.
 (a) might have acted (b) might act
 (c) might acted (d) may have acted
38. Calamities such as earthquakes _____ by a human being.
 (a) would not be controlled (b) may not be controlled
 (c) should not be controlled (d) cannot be controlled
39. You _____ obey the advice of your teacher.
 (a) could (b) are
 (c) should (d) can
40. For a better future, we _____ our forests.
 (a) must conserve (b) conserve
 (c) cut (d) may conserve
41. All the youngsters _____ respect their elders and teachers.
 (a) can (b) may
 (c) might (d) must
42. Your child is safe in the hands of a policeman. You _____ not worry.
 (a) can (b) dare
 (c) need (d) should
43. "_____ you please open that window?" - she asked politely.
 (a) Could (b) Can
 (c) Must (d) Shall
44. You _____ have caught the train if you had run fast.
 (a) must (b) can
 (c) should (d) could
45. Raj _____ speak English.
 (a) can (b) may
 (c) would (d) is
46. You _____ help your poor friends.
 (a) will (b) would
 (c) ought to (d) may
47. How _____ you talk to my wife?
 (a) ought (b) dare
 (c) need (d) might
48. We _____ keep our city clean.
 (a) should (b) could
 (c) would (d) none
49. Electricity _____ in every village.
 (a) should be supply (b) should supply
 (c) should be supplied (d) should supplied
50. He _____ be doctor, if he worked hard.
 (a) should (b) will
 (c) would (d) shall

51. _____ God bless you, dear!
(a) Will (b) May
(c) Can (d) Might
52. To avoid accidents, we _____ have to follow traffic rules and regulations.
(a) should (b) must
(c) could (d) shall
53. You _____ wear a sweater to keep yourself warm.
(a) must (b) can
(c) might (d) could
54. You _____ go home.
(a) may (b) can
(c) might (d) Not Any
55. Every one _____ keep surrounding clean.
(a) can (b) should
(c) could (d) None of the above
56. _____ you have a wonderful result!
(a) Can (b) May
(c) Might (d) Could
57. The level of flood is rising; the villagers _____ vacate the village immediately.
(a) must (b) need to
(c) should (d) ought to
58. George has travelled a lot. He _____ speak many languages.
(a) should (b) can
(c) will (d) must
59. When Hemant was at Chirag's flat yesterday, Hemant asked if he _____ uses the phone.
(a) can (b) may
(c) must (d) could
60. I _____ to be an atheist but I believe in God.
(a) would (b) could
(c) ought (d) used

Solutions

1.	b	2.	b	3.	c	4.	b	5.	b	6.	a	7.	a	8.	c	9.	a	10.	a
11.	c	12.	a	13.	a	14.	b	15.	b	16.	a	17.	a	18.	b	19.		20.	a
21.	b	22.	a	23.	b	24.	d	25.	c	26.	a	27.	d	28.	a	29.	c	30.	d
31.	a	32.	b	33.	a	34.	d	35.	a	36.	c	37.	a	38.	d	39.	c	40.	a
41.	d	42.	c	43.	a	44.	d	45.	a	46.	c	47.	b	48.	a	49.	c	50.	c
51.	b	52.	b	53.	c	54.	b	55.	b	56.	b	57.	a	58.	b	59.	d	60.	c

