

Modals

The words which show the mode of action denoted by the main verbs are called modals. Main models are shall, will, would, can could, may, might, must, need, ought to, need to, etc.

1. Shall

- (a) I shall eat food after 2 hours. (Simple future)
- (b) Shall I cook Maggie for you? (In question to enquire the other's desire)
- (c) With second person.
I say he shall open the door. (Order)
You shall get a new shirt if you stand first.
He shall be killed for the rude behavior. (Warning)
Shall I use your pen? (Permission)
I shall gladly visit the book fair. (Willingness)
He shall not tell a lie. (Prohibition)

2. Will

- (a) He will go tomorrow. (Future tense with second and third person)
- (b) With first person
This glass will hold the whole milk. (Capacity)
He will never betray me. (Prediction)

3. Should (Past form of 'shall')

- (a) We said that they should reach home. (Present Past in future)
- (b) You should help the needy. (Duty or obligation)
- (c) We should obey our elders. (Advice)
- (d) Speak carefully lest you should falter. (It shows objective after 'lest')
- (e) Should you bring sweets, share them among all. (Supposition)

4. Would (Past form of 'will')

- (a) He told that he would visit my home.
- (b) Gandhiji would spin every morning. (It tells the past habit)
- (c) Would you give me a pen? (Polite request in present)
- (d) Would that I were careful! (Unreal condition)
- (e) I wish he would reach here soon. (Desire)
- (f) I would suffer rather than borrow. (Preference)
- (g) He would stand first if he works hard. (Condition)

5. Can

- (a) I can lift the heavy stone. (To show ability)
- (b) Anyone can learn the poem. (Possibility)
- (c) You can stand here. (Permission)
- (d) He can betray you. (Nature)
- (e) She can't help weeping. (Compulsion)

6. Could (Past form of Can)

It shows all the properties/power of can, but in past tense.

- (a) He could teach her. (Ability)
- (b) He could run fast when he was a child. (Ability)

7. May

- (a) May I come in? (Permission)
- (b) It may rain today. (Possibility)
- (c) It is cloudy it may rain. (Factual possibility)
- (d) You earn so that you may live well. (Purpose)
- (e) May God bless you! (Prayer, wish)

8. Might (Past form of May)

- (a) He ran fast so that he might catch the thief. (Purpose in past)
- (b) He has not promised, but he might help me. (Remote possibility)
- (c) The tortoise said that he might defeat the hare. (Possibility in past)
- (d) If you are going to the hospital you might bring my medicine (Request)

9. Must

- (a) He must work hard to stand first. (Necessity)
- (b) We must do our homework in time. (Obligation)
- (c) You must obey the law's. (Compulsion)
- (d) You must not tell a lie. (Emphatic Advice)
- (e) He must be forty now. (Certainty of belief)
- (f) You must not interfere in anyone's matter. (Prohibition)
- (g) A judge must be natural. (Dutiful Activity)

10. Ought to

- (a) You ought to serve the country (Moral duty)
- (b) He ought to buy new clothes now. (Desirability)
- (c) You ought to read mysterious novel. (Recommendation)
- (d) You ought to work hard to stand first. (Advice)

11. Need

- (a) You need not stay here. (Negative necessity)
- (b) Need she go there? (Question)

12. Dare (To venture)

- (1) He dare not speak against me.
- (2) How dare you declare so? (Question)

13. Used to (Show habit of past)

- (a) He used to run fast when he was a child. (Habit of past)
- (b) She used to walk every morning.