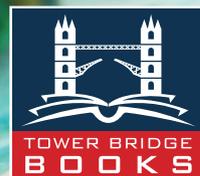


A Piece of Cake

STUDENT'S
BOOK

GRAMMAR B2-C2



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MODAL VERBS



ENGLISH Q & A FORUM Ask us anything! We can help!



Christina (Italy)

Hello guys! Yesterday I did not go to work because I was ill. I didn't go to a doctor, though. So, what should I say to my boss?
a. *Sorry, I should have gone to a doctor.* or b. *Sorry, I must have gone to a doctor.*

Paul (US)

Hello Christina, and thank you for your question. Well, the correct answer is **a. "Sorry, I should have gone to a doctor."** That means that it was necessary to go, but for some reason you didn't. The other option "*I must have gone to a doctor*" doesn't make any sense as the structure "*must have done something*" is never used for obligation in the past.



Here is a list of the **modal verbs** in English:

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-----------------|---------|
| can | could | may | might | will |
| would | must | shall | should/ought to | have to |

Below you can find the main FUNCTIONS of the modal verbs in English:

PROBABILITY: GUESSING AND MAKING DEDUCTIONS

To begin with, modal verbs can be used when we want to say how sure we are that something is happening/ will happen/ happened. We often call these "**modals of probability**".

PRESENT PROBABILITY

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| will | + bare infinitive |
| must | |
| can't | |
| might/might not | |
| may/may not | |
| could/could not | |

For example:

Where is Kate **NOW**?

- **She can't be at work now**= I am pretty sure that she ISN'T at work now. (negative possibility)
- **She must be at work now**= I am pretty sure that she is at work now.
- **She may be at work now**= Perhaps she is at work now.

NOTE: The opposite of *must* is *can't* in this case and **NOT** *mustn't*.
WE CANNOT SAY: "She *mustn't* be at work now!"



PAST PROBABILITY

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| will | + HAVE + past participle |
| must | |
| can't | |
| might/might not | |
| may/may not | |
| could/could not | |

For example:

Where was Kate **last night**?

- **She must have fallen asleep**= I am pretty sure that she FELL asleep.
- **She can't have fallen asleep**= I am pretty sure that she DIDN'T fall asleep.
- **She might have fallen asleep**= Perhaps she fell asleep.



REMEMBER: I think they **should be** on their way to Barcelona now. (We don't say they are on their way because we aren't sure).
I think that the plane **should have landed** by now. (We don't say it landed because we aren't sure).

A. Fill in the gaps using modal verbs of probability for the present or past.

- Where is my coat? I saw it earlier, so it in this room. (*be*)
- What? Betty is there? She with you, she said she would stay at my place! (*stay*)
- Lucy at home right now! She always goes jogging every morning. (*be*)
- Can you help me find my briefcase? it in the meeting room yesterday! (*leave*)
- A: Where are they? B: Don't worry, they here any minute now! (*be*)
- How about going to the airport with him? He the right gate alone, I'm sure! (*find*)
- When Peter came home last night, he found a present on the table! His wife it for him! (*buy*)
- He won't answer my calls! He his phone at home! (*leave*)
- The clouds look ominous! It later! (*rain*)
- Why didn't you wear a helmet? You an accident! (*have*)

ABILITY

The modal verbs we use to speak about ability are the following:

PRESENT ABILITY

can/can't + infinitive

e.g. I can speak five foreign languages.

She can't ride a motorcycle.

PAST ABILITY

could/couldn't + infinitive (for general ability)

e.g. I could run very fast when I was a teenager.

She could sing really well, but then she took up smoking.



NOTE: be/was able to (for specific occasions)
e.g. He was able to enter University, even though he wasn't a very good student. (NOT he could enter)

FUTURE

- will/won't be able to

e.g. When you finish your English lessons, you will be able to speak more fluently.

She won't be able to get her driving licence if she doesn't drive carefully!

- can/can't

e.g. I can help you later!

I can't come to the party tonight.

REMEMBER: *I couldn't have succeeded without your help*= I succeeded thanks to you. I wouldn't have been able to do so without you.

I couldn't succeed, even though you helped me= Despite your help, I NEVER succeeded.

B. Choose the correct answer a, b, or c.

1. We get to the meeting on time yesterday due to the traffic.

- a. won't b. can't c. weren't able to

2. She law, but she preferred to become a hostess.

- a. could have studied b. could study c. was able to study

3. My professor did her best to help me, but I finally hand in the assignment on time.

- a. can't b. couldn't c. couldn't have

4. Mary make it to the party, after all. She is up to her eyes in work!

- a. won't b. wasn't able to c. can't

5. After three years of lessons, I speak Japanese!

- a. was able to b. could speak c. will be able to

6. Thank you so much. I without you!

- a. could do it b. was able to do it c. couldn't have done it

7. Bill play the piano! He has never studied it!

- a. couldn't b. can't c. could have

8. She read when she was only 3 years old!

- a. can b. was able to c. could

9. When my computer crashed last night, I was very pleased because I solve the problem.

- a. could b. was able to c. won't

10. She much better in her life had it not been for her wrong decisions.

- a. could have done b. was able to c. could do

OBLIGATION/ADVICE

We can use modal verbs like *must, should, have to, ought to* to give orders or advice, or say when something is necessary or unnecessary.

PRESENT OBLIGATION/ADVICE

must/mustn't
have to/don't have to } + infinitive (obligation)

should/shouldn't
ought to/oughtn't to } + infinitive (advice)

e.g.

You mustn't smoke during meetings= *You can't smoke during meetings/It is forbidden to smoke during meetings.* (negative obligation)

You don't have to eat peanuts if you don't like them= *It is not necessary to eat peanuts if you don't like them.* (no obligation)

You should/ought to invest in mutual bonds= *It is a good idea to do this.* (advice)

NOTE: mustn't VS don't have to

- **mustn't** means that something is NOT allowed or it is a very bad idea: *You mustn't drink too much wine.*
- **don't have to** means that you don't need to do something, but it is fine if you still want to do it: *You don't have to write this report today!* (Of course, if you want to write it today, that is fine!)

PAST OBLIGATION/ADVICE

had to/didn't have to + INFINITIVE

should
ought to } + HAVE + past participle

e.g.

"Why didn't you come to the party yesterday?"

- **"I had to visit my sister, who was sick"**= *"It was necessary to visit my sister, who was sick."*

- **"Yes, I know, I should have/ought to have come"**= *"Yes, I didn't come, but I regret it."*

- **"I actually forgot about it. I feel so sorry, I shouldn't have/oughtn't to have forgotten about it"**= *"Yes, I forgot about it and I feel bad now."*

! **NOTE:** We can use *may* to say that something is not allowed: *You may not use this information for your presentation!* = *It is not allowed!*

! **REMEMBER:** *I should have done* my homework earlier. Now it's too late!

NOT *I must have done* my homework earlier!

C. Spot the mistake and correct it.

1. I have to take my child to the doctor yesterday, that is why I was late!

2. You should park your car there. It is for handicapped people!

3. Sorry I didn't bring my laptop with me. I must have taken it.

4. You have to eat mushrooms if you don't like them!

5. After one month of working with us, she jumped ship! She oughtn't to quit her job so soon!

6. You mustn't wait in the queue if there is nobody there!

7. You don't have to talk on your phone while you are driving!

8. I bought a new phone, but the battery is acting up. I mustn't have bought it.

9. She mustn't to snap at her colleagues all the time!

10. You mustn't come to work tomorrow. It's a bank holiday!

REQUESTS/ASKING FOR PERMISSION/ OFFERS

• *can, could, will,* and *would* are used to **express requests:**

e.g.
Will you do me a favour? (more informal)
Would you do me a favour? (more polite)

• *can, could,* and *may* are used to **ask for permission:**

e.g.
Can I borrow your car? (more informal)
Could/May I borrow your car? (more polite)

• *can, could, may, shall,* and *would* are used to **offer help:**

e.g.
Can I give you a hand with that? (more informal)
Shall I give you a hand with that? (more polite)

! **NOTE:** We only use the modal verb *shall* with *I* and *we* in questions.

SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

We can use the following verbs when suggesting a new idea.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRESENT

| | |
|--------|--------------|
| should | + infinitive |
| may | |
| might | |
| can | |
| could | |
| would | |

For stronger suggestions:

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| must | + infinitive |
| have to | |

e.g.
You **should** offer a discount to boost your sales.
You **may** try launching an advertising campaign to promote your products.
You **could** contact a consultant to help you.
If I were you, I would avoid accumulating too much stock.
You **must/have to** definitely **visit** the Eiffel Tower. It's fabulous!

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PAST

| | |
|--------|----------------------------|
| should | } + HAVE + past participle |
| could | |
| might | |

e.g.

A: I failed in my French exam.

B: You **should have studied** more= It was necessary to study more (but you didn't).

You **could/might have hired** a tutor to help you= If you had hired a tutor, it would have been useful (but you didn't).

HABITS

We can use *will* and *would* to talk about things we often do in the present or used to do in the past.

PRESENT HABITS

| | |
|------|--|
| will | + infinitive |
| | (used for current habits, followed by always, forever, constantly) |

e.g.

Kate will always check the door twice before she goes to work!

They will forever forget what my name is. It makes me feel so embarrassed! (forever has negative connotations here)

PAST HABITS

| | |
|-------|--------------|
| would | + infinitive |
|-------|--------------|

When I lived in Manchester, I would often buy fish and chips from the nearby fast-food restaurant. It was delicious!

D. Let's look at Rory's bad habits. Find out what they are (or were) and give him some suggestions to improve.

e.g.

Rory always forgets to turn off the heating before leaving for work.

Rory will always forget to turn off the heating before leaving for work (habit)

He could install a timer to turn off the heating automatically. (suggestion)

1. Rory constantly turns up late at important meetings.

(habit).....

(suggestion)

2. Rory often left a mess in his office.

(habit).....

(suggestion)

3. Rory always calls off appointments with customers.

(habit).....

(suggestion)

4. Rory usually eats junk food after work.

(habit).....

(suggestion)

5. Rory often used to leave the oven on when he was busy working on his computer.

(habit).....

(suggestion)



REMEMBER: *I would have visited my parents, but I was too busy!* = *I wanted to visit my parents, but I was too busy!* (past willingness)

E. Make sentences using the correct *past modal verb*, as in the example (use *could have/might have/should have/would have*).

e.g. *I had guests over for dinner, but I had no wine. (express past regret/buy)*

I should have bought some wine before the dinner.

1. I left the kids alone in the house.
(express past regret/not leave)

.....
.....

2. We wanted to join you for a meal, but we couldn't find a babysitter.
(express past willingness/join)

.....
.....

3. I ate so much chocolate and my stomach hurts!
(express past regret/not eat)

.....
.....

4. Yesterday, my car broke down and I walked all the way to my job.
(express an alternative possibility for the past/take a taxi)

.....
.....

5. Nobody ever told me that you were meeting every weekend for drinks.
(express past possibility/tell)

.....
.....

6. They wanted to call us, but they didn't know our number.
(express past willingness/call)

.....
.....

7. It wouldn't have been possible for me to get the promotion without you.
(express past negative possibility/not get)

.....
.....

8. We fell behind with our project due to bad planning.
(express suggestion for a past action/extend the deadline)

.....
.....

9. Carlos wanted to finish his work, but he felt sick and decided to go home and rest.
(express past willingness/finish)

.....
.....

10. Ms. Ramos fired Julie because she turned up late. I think this was unfair.
(express past regret/not fire)

.....
.....



NEEDN'T do something

Giving someone permission NOT to do something (PRESENT)

need/needn't

+ infinitive is nearly always used in **negative sentences** and sometimes in **questions**

e.g.

You needn't come if you don't want to= Don't feel obliged to come if you don't want to.

"Need I call Jane?"= "Is it necessary to call Jane?" "No, you needn't. I was planning to do that later."

I didn't have to buy any books= I didn't need to buy any books. I found them all online (= It wasn't necessary, so I didn't do that.)

UNNECESSARY EVENTS

NEEDN'T HAVE done something

The action is done, but it was unnecessary or a waste of time (PAST)

e.g.

We needn't have spent so much time looking for these files. Mark had them!= Looking for the files was a waste of time as Mark had them! Our efforts were in vain!



NOTE: didn't have to do something VERSUS needn't have done something

Study the following examples:

I didn't have to wake up early yesterday because it was Sunday!= I didn't wake up early yesterday because it wasn't necessary.

I needn't have woken up early yesterday because it was Sunday. Uff, I forgot!= I woke up early, even though it wasn't necessary.

CONTINUOUS FORMS

Modals have no continuous forms. However, we can say **modal + be + ing**:

a. to lay emphasis

b. to speak about something happening at the moment of speaking

"Where is Kate now?"

- "She **could be working on her presentation now.**" (maybe)

- "She **should be working on her presentation now.**" (certainly)

F. Spot the mistake and correct it.

1. You didn't have to wash the dishes as I was planning to do that in the evening.

2. Sarah worked through the weekend to finish her assignment, even though she doesn't have to.

3. You don't need spend a lot of money on presents.

4. I didn't need see a doctor. I felt a lot better after resting a bit.

5. Need I to say anything else about this?

6. You need pay more attention to what your teacher says.

7. The train arrived 3 minutes after you left, so you needn't walked.

8. You needn't to come to the party if you aren't up for it!

9. The fire was extinguished, so the residents of the city didn't had to evacuate their homes

10. I know how much you love me! You needn't bring me flowers!



VOCABULARY BOOSTER

PHRASAL VERBS

- **call off:** cancel; ακυρώνω, ματαιώνω
- **catch on:** 1. understand what you couldn't understand earlier; καταλαβαίνω, "το πιάνω" 2. become popular; γίνομαι δημοφιλής
- **cater to:** meet others' needs; καλύπτω τις ανάγκες των άλλων
- **come up against:** face a difficult situation or a difficult opponent; αντιμετωπίζω (κατάσταση/αντίπαλο)
- **crack down:** enforce a law or a rule more strictly; παίρνω σκληρότερα μέτρα
- **dawn on:** when sth dawns on sb, they realise it; συνειδητοποιώ
- **delve into:** try to find information by examining something thoroughly; εμβαθύνω
- **die down:** gradually become weaker; ελαττώνομαι
- **dip into:** take money from an amount that has been saved or put aside for a specific purpose; βάζω το χέρι βαθιά στην τσέπη
- **do away with (oneself):** commit suicide; αυτοκτονώ
- **drum up:** try to obtain support or business by means of persuasion; κερδίζω/συγκεντρώνω (υποστήριξη)

A. Fill in the gaps with the phrasal verbs given above.

1. The actress herself when she found out the truth.
2. We need to support before the elections.
3. His voice as he walked away.
4. We have decided to on those who lose their books.
5. I didn't what he said, so he had to repeat it.
6. When it him that everyone was lying to him, he went to the police.
7. This kind of shirt in the 60s.
8. Online shopping every conceivable need.
9. Let me know if you any difficulties.
10. She had to the meeting as she was feeling under the weather.
11. While spending his summer in the monastery, he decided to the ancient archives.
12. When my car broke down, I had to my savings to get it repaired.

B. Choose the correct option (A, B, or C).

1. This shop every customer's needs.
a. caters to b. calls off c. delves into
2. She can't what you say because she's hard of hearing.
a. catch on b. dawn on c. crack up
3. They said the wind will in the evening.
a. die down b. catch on c. call off
4. My son was about to study abroad, so I had to my savings to cover the expenses.
a. catch on b. delve into c. dip into
5. When it her that she was her daughter, she fainted.
a. caught on b. dawned on c. called off
6. All politicians support before the elections.
a. drum up b. crack up c. catch on
7. This music four decades ago.
a. called off b. caught on c. dawned on
8. So many people have themselves because of debts.
a. caught on b. delved into c. done away with
9. We need to on violence.
a. crack down b. call off c. die down
10. She had this kind of problem before.
a. caught on b. died down c. come up against



**VERBS, NOUNS, AND ADJECTIVES
WITH PREPOSITIONS**

- eligible for • envious of • exposed to
- immune from • immune to

A. Fill in the gaps with the correct item.

1. Being various accents will surely help you master the language.
2. No one is taxation.
3. I don't understand why you keep hanging around with people you are
4. She was naturally various diseases.
5. Let me check if you are a discount, Sir.

B. Fill in the gaps with the correct preposition.

1. They are immune legal action.
2. I would never expose you such risks.
3. How can someone be envious others' happiness?
4. Am I eligible this programme?
5. Are you immune hepatitis B?

IDIOMS

- by leaps and bounds • come in handy
- a couch doctor • at death's door • drop a brick

A. Replace the phrases in italics with the idioms above.

1. I don't want to go out with Jim as he always *says or does embarrassing things*.
.....
2. I'm afraid my aunt is *dying*.
.....
3. Have you ever visited a *shrink*?
.....
4. I'm sure these articles will *help shed light on various topics*.
.....
5. The city has grown *rapidly and immensely*.
.....

B. Fill in the gaps with the idioms from the box below.

go under the knife / have the cheek / in mint condition

1. Having several times before, she was used to being bedridden for a period of time.
2. Why sell your car? It's!
3. You to ask me to forgive you after all you've done?

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

- for certain/sure • for fear of • for lack of • for life
- for (the) love • for real • for the sake of • for want of
- from experience • from memory

A. Fill in the gaps with the correct word.

1. You are required to recite a poem from
2. The action scenes in the film weren't for
3. Let's call him Alex, for of a better name.
4. She played for the of the game.
5. For of anything better to do, they decided to go to the park.
6. I'll fight depression for my son's
7. They spoke in hushed tones for of being heard by the enemy.
8. He knew from that their love affair was going nowhere.
9. I'll come to the party for
10. He became blind for



REVISION - UNITS 1-3

A. Fill in the gaps using the appropriate present tense.

1. Harry (*study*) hard this week.
2. We (*not complete*) the course yet.
3. You can't leave the seminar now because the plenary speaker (*just stand*) on the podium.
4. Don't forget that you (*still owe*) me an apology.
5. It's the first time I (*ever be*) abroad.
6. Joanne (*go*) to the meeting room.
7. I feel exhausted. I (*burn*) the midnight oil for this presentation for over a month.
8. Christine is quite sceptical. She (*not seem*) to have got over her divorce.
9. I (*see*) my doctor this evening.
10. I can't stand my boss anymore! He (*forever criticise*) what I do!



B. Spot the mistake.

1. I will have worked on my assignment for three weeks by the end of the month.
.....
.....
2. We'd better get moving because the book presentation is due to begin.
.....
.....
3. According to the timetable, the plane will have left at noon.
.....
.....
4. The reports will write by Monday.
.....
.....
5. The buffet will have been preparing by the chef and his team just before the reception.
.....
.....
6. The two largest computer companies are due to sign a merger.
.....
.....
.....
7. The parcel will be dispatched by 5:00.
.....
.....
8. The HR Manager will have informed you about your interview.
.....
.....
9. By tomorrow morning, I will be handing in my report.
.....
.....
10. Will you have taken the car tonight?
.....
.....

C. Complete the second sentence using the word given, so that it has the same meaning as the first one. Use between two and five words, including the word given.

1. It's annoying that Maria is scrolling on her mobile all the time. **ALWAYS**

Maria on her mobile.

2. It was about a decade since the recession had begun. **GOING**

The recession for a decade.

3. The students will have completed their assignments by the end of the week. **COMPLETED**

The assignments by the end of the week.

4. I started taking French lessons two months ago. **LEARNING**

I French for two months.

5. Jamie didn't have any experience in writing poetry. **NEVER**

Jamie poetry before.

6. I have visited the Louvre once. **BEEN**

I the Louvre once before.

7. He used to visit his grandparents every weekend when he was a kid. **WOULD**

He his grandparents every weekend when he was a kid.

8. I found it hard to work in a different field compared to what I studied. **USED**

I in a different field compared to what I studied.

9. Have you lived here for long? **LONG**

How here?

10. Mum isn't here. She went shopping. **GONE**

Mum shopping.

D. Spot the mistake and correct it. Some sentences are correct.

1. David admitted to having made a mistake in his judgement.
.....

2. She was busy to do work on her essay.
.....

3. He risks to lose his job by not being punctual!
.....

4. She denied to turn him in to the police.
.....

5. He was seen smash the window.
.....

6. Why not invest on crypto currency?
.....

7. She was let to take sick leave.
.....

8. He pretended listening to his teacher.
.....



E. Choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D).

- The new government has on taxes.
 a. stopped negotiating b. finished to negotiate
 c. finished negotiating d. stopped to negotiate
- Do you the oven before you left for the office?
 a. forget turning off b. forget to turn off
 c. remember to turn off d. remember turning off
- She has sweets.
 a. finished eating b. stopped eating
 c. finished to eat d. stopped to eat
- I stopped some fruit on my way home.
 a. to buy b. buying
 c. having bought d. to have bought
- I discussed it with him and then I went on my review.
 a. writing b. to write
 c. to writing d. having written
- I regret you that you have not passed the test.
 a. informing b. to inform you
 c. having informed d. to have informed you
- She regretted for that post.
 a. to apply b. having applied
 c. to have applied d. to having applied
- the project on time, I was allowed to leave earlier.
 a. Finish b. To finish
 c. Finishing d. To have finished
- Your shirt needs
 a. iron b. to iron
 c. being ironed d. to be ironed
- He tried the chair, but, unfortunately he didn't make it.
 a. to assemble b. to assembling
 c. having assembled d. to have assembled

F. Choose the correct answer a, b, or c.

- We find a taxi due to the rain.
 a. weren't able to b. won't c. can't
- She medicine, but she ended up becoming an actress.
 a. could study b. could have studied c. was able to study
- My coach did her best to help me, but I finally win the match.
 a. can't b. couldn't c. couldn't have
- Mary make it to the meeting because of the traffic.
 a. won't b. wasn't able to c. can't
- After three years of studying, I earn my degree.
 a. could speak b. was able to c. will be able to
- I'm very grateful for your guidance. I without your help!
 a. couldn't have b. couldn't do it c. was able to do it done it
- Helena speak Spanish. She's never studied it.
 a. couldn't b. can't c. could have
- She solve simple Math equations when she was only 3 years old!
 a. can b. was able to c. could
- When the problem arose, I was very pleased with myself because I solve it.
 a. could b. was able to c. won't
- He the tournament had it not been for his injury.
 a. could have won b. was able to win c. could win



G. Make sentences using the correct past modal verb, as in the example (use *could have/might have/should have/would have*).

e.g.

I had guests over for dinner, but I had no wine. (express past regret/buy)

I should have bought some wine before the dinner.

1. I put on weight by eating too many sweets. (*express past regret/not eat*)

.....

2. I wanted to come to the party earlier, but I couldn't find a taxi. (*express past willingness/come*)

.....

3. I went jogging for two hours and now my legs are killing me! (*express past regret/not jog*)

.....

4. You didn't tell me you saw that woman. I wanted to know! (*express past possibility/tell*)

.....

5. You lied to her. I think this was inappropriate. (*express past regret/not lie*)

.....

6. Yesterday, I lost my wallet, but I didn't report this to the police. (*express an alternative possibility for the past/report*)

.....

7. I wanted to buy you a pair of trousers, but I didn't know your size. (*express past willingness/buy*)

.....

8. It wouldn't have been possible for me to pass the test without your help. (*express past negative possibility/not pass*)

.....

9. I got a low grade because I didn't have much time on my hands. (*express suggestion for a past action/the professor give more time*)

.....

10. Sue wanted to finish her report, but she had an important appointment. (*express past willingness/finish*)

.....

H. Spot the mistake and correct it.

1. You didn't have to do the ironing as I was planning to do that in the evening.

.....

2. Sarah worked overtime to finish her report, even though she needn't.

.....

3. You don't need worry about such trivial matters.

.....

4. I didn't need cancel the meeting.

.....

5. I know how much you care! You didn't have to bring me chocolates!

.....

6. You need put in more effort.

.....

7. You didn't need to buy any milk as we already have two cartons in the fridge.

.....

8. Need I to explain any further?

.....

9. You needn't to attend the lecture if you have a headache.

.....

10. It was Sunday, so the children needn't have to go to school.

.....

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