

PAST MODALS

Practice

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) That *can't have been/shouldn't have been* Nick that you saw.
- b) You *must have given/might have given* me a hand!
- c) I caught a later train because I *had to see/must have seen* a client.
- d) I suppose Bill *should have lost/might have lost* his way.
- e) I didn't refuse the cake, as it *should have been/would have been* rude.
- f) I don't know who rang, but it *could have been/must have been* Jim.
- g) It was odd that you *should have bought/would have bought* the same car.
- h) I asked them to leave but they *might not/wouldn't* go.
- i) It's a pity you didn't ask because I *can't help/could have helped* you.
- j) It's your own fault, you *can't have/shouldn't have* gone to bed so late.

2 Complete each sentence using one of the phrases from the box.

can't have	must have	shouldn't have	may not have
may have	shouldn't have	can't have	ought to have
didn't need to	shouldn't have		

- a) You and your big mouth! It was supposed to be a secret. You shouldn't have told her!
- b) The plane is late. It landed by now.
- c) You met my brother. I haven't got one!
- d) There is only one explanation. You left your keys on the bus.
- e) You heard me right. I definitely said 204525.
- f) The meat is a bit burnt. You cooked it for so long.
- g) I'm sorry. I accept I been a little bit rude.
- h) You really taken so much trouble over me.
- i) Was it really necessary? You tell the police, you know,
- j) Keep your fingers crossed! The traffic warden noticed the car's parking ticket has run out!

Grammar 12

- 1 a) *can't have been*
b) might have given
c) had to see
d) might have lost
e) would have been
f) could have been
g) should have bought
h) wouldn't
i) could have helped
j) shouldn't have
- 2 a) *shouldn't have*
b) ought to have
c) can't have
d) must have
e) can't have
f) shouldn't have
g) may have
h) shouldn't have
i) didn't need to
j) may not have
- 3 a) *couldn't have left you to do*
b) might not have noticed (that)
c) needn't have gone to
d) is said to have borrowed
e) might have backed
f) needn't have worried
g) cannot possibly have opened
h) could have given
i) to leave might have left
j) did not have to wear

3 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- a) It wouldn't have been right to leave you to do all the work on your own.
couldn't
couldn't have left you to do all the work on your own.
- b) Perhaps they didn't notice the tyre was flat.
might
They the tyre was flat.
- c) All that trouble I went to wasn't necessary in the end.
needn't
I all that trouble.
- d) Apparently someone has borrowed the cassette player.
have
Someone the cassette player.
- e) I'm disappointed that you didn't back me up!
might
You me up!
- f) Our worrying so much was a waste of time.
needn't
We so much.
- g) It's just not possible for the cat to have opened the fridge.
possibly
The cat the fridge.
- h) It would have been possible for Helen to take us in her car.
could
Helen us a lift.
- i) It's possible that the last person to leave didn't lock the door.
might
The last person the door unlocked.
- j) School uniform wasn't compulsory at my school.
wear
We school uniform at my school.

4 Complete each sentence by writing one word in each space. Contractions (*can't*) count as one word.

- a) I could..... have become a millionaire, but I decided not to.
- b) You..... have been here when Helen told the boss not to be so lazy! It was great!
- c) Peter wasn't here then, so he..... have broken your vase.
- d) I..... have bought that car, but I decided to look at a few others.
- e) If you felt lonely, you..... have given me a ring.
- f) Don't take a risk like that again! We..... have lost because of you.
- g) It's been more than a week! You..... have had some news by now!
- h) We were glad to help. We..... have just stood by and done nothing.
- i) You really..... have gone to so much trouble!
- j) I..... have thought that it was rather difficult.

5 Correct any errors in these sentences. Some sentences are correct.

- a) Surely you mustn't have forgotten already! can't.....
- b) Even Paul couldn't have foreseen what was coming next
- c) Frances might not have understood what you said
- d) It was funny that she should have remembered me
- e) Harry may have won the match with a bit more effort
- f) You must have told me you had already eaten
- g) Look, there's £30 in my wallet. I shouldn't have gone to the bank after all.
- h) You mustn't have been so unkind!.....
- i) I couldn't have managed without you.....
- j) I have no idea who it was, but I suppose it would have been Ann.....

6 Underline the most suitable adverb for each space.

- a) Someone obviously/currently/fortunately must have picked it up by mistake.
- b) He could really/cheerfully/easily have stolen the painting without anyone knowing.
- c) I may surely/well/dearly have made a mistake.
- d) You really/clearly/needlessly shouldn't have spent so much on my present.
- e) Bill rarely/simply/certainly wouldn't listen to anything we said.
- f) I couldn't just/yet/already have left without saying a word.
- g) Certainly/Rarely/Surely you can't seriously believe that I am guilty!
- h) I opened the window, I greatly/surely/simply had to get some fresh air.
- i) I still/unfortunately/surely couldn't have come to your party,
- j) How dangerous! You could still/strongly/well have been injured!

KEY

- 4 a) *could*
b) *should*
c) *couldn't*
d) *could/might/should*
e) *should/could*
f) *might/could*
g) *should/must*
h) *could not*
i) *should not*
j) *would/should*
- 5 a) *can't*
b) *could/might have won*
c) *should/could have told*
d) *need not have gone*
e) *should not have been*
f) *could/might have been*
- 6 a) *obviously*
b) *easily*
c) *well*
d) *really*
e) *simply*
f) *just*
g) *Surely*
h) *simply*
i) *still*
j) *well*