

Modals

VBO35, seminar VI

In *most* of the sentences below there are mistakes concerning the use of modal verbs. Can you correct them?

1. I had lost my car keys so I took out a knife and could get the car started.
2. When I was a teenager I could run 1500 m in less than four minutes.
3. No, you can not have any more sweets!
4. I couldn't jump out of a plane with a parachute – I'd be too scared.
5. It's disgusting! I must pay another 10,000 Kc in tax!
6. The law says that you don't have to smoke at tram and bus stops etc.
7. In those days it was easier to get permission to travel, so I could take my whole family to West Germany to visit Roland.

I had lost my car keys so I took out a knife and could get the car started.

I had lost my car keys so I took out a knife and **WAS ABLE TO** get the car started.

When I was a teenager I could run 1500 m in less than four minutes.

Fine.

No, you can not have any more sweets!

No, you **CANNOT** have any more sweets!

I couldn't jump out of a plane with a parachute – I'd be too scared.

FINE.

It's disgusting! I must pay another 10,000 Kc in tax!

It's disgusting! I **HAVE TO** pay another 10,000 Kc in tax!

The law says that you don't have to smoke at tram and bus stops etc.

The law says that you **MUSTN'T / CAN'T** smoke at tram and bus stops etc.

In those days it was easier to get permission to travel, so I could take my whole family to West Germany to visit Roland.

Fine

The following verbs collocate either with *have*, *take*, or *bring*. Match them to one or two of these.

place

a decision

a shower

a deep breath

sth to eat

(an) experience

fun

a taxi

charges (against sb)

sth to a close

a rest

the bus,

dinner / lunch

care of sbdy

control of smth

part in sth

st to an end

a seat

a shower

a picnic

a shower

sth to sb's attention

a party

medicine

tears to sb's eyes

a party

an exam

an operation

a holiday

time

have + ...

a shower
dinner / lunch
sth to eat
(an) experience
fun
a holiday
an operation
a party
a picnic
a rest
time

take + ...

the bus,
a taxi
care of sb
control of smth
a decision
a deep breath
an exam
medicine
part in sth
place
a seat
time

bring + ...

sth to sb's attention
charges (against sb)
sth to a close
st to an end
tears to sb's eyes

Bars and pubs in town centres should close at 10.30 p.m. every day of the week.

Discussion

1. Decide if you are happy or not with the proposal.
2. Think of at least two reasons why / why not. Write them down. Each of them must contain a modal verb.

Bars and pubs in town centres should close at 10.30 p.m. every day of the week.

Apples

You're an office worker who has to get up for work very early in the morning. The block of flats where you live in the centre of town has a bar underneath it.

Oranges

You are a student and you live in a village with your parents. Most of your friends live in town so that's where you usually meet up with them.

Bananas

You're a bar owner who has a bar in the centre of town with a terrace which does really well in the summer months.

Discussion language:

Agreeing:

I quite agree.

I totally agree

That's what I think, too.

Absolutely!

Half-agreeing:

I take your point, but . . .

I see what you mean, but . . .

I agree up to a point, but . . .

Disagreeing:

I completely disagree

I don't agree at all.

BNC: The British National Corpus

BRITISH NATIONAL CORPUS

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About the BNC

The British National Corpus (BNC) is a 100 million word collection of samples of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a wide cross-section of current British English, both spoken and written. [[more](#)]

Simple Search from the British Library

Type a word or phrase in the search box and press the Go button to see up to 50 random hits from the corpus.

Look up:

You can search for a single word or a phrase, restrict searches by part of speech, search in parts of the corpus only, and much more. This is a link to the simple search facility hosted by the British Library.

The search result will show the total frequency in the corpus and up to 50 examples. [[more information](#)]

There are other online services offering more advanced search functions (some require user registration):

- [BYU-BNC \(Brigham Young University\)](#)
- [BNCWeb at Lancaster University](#)
- [BNCWeb at Oxford \[Oxford University users only\]](#)
- [Intellitext \(University of Leeds\)](#)
- [Phrases in English](#)



```
... lemma="the"
" lemma="cost">cost
NN1" lemma="issue">is.
jal">legal </w><w type="
ID" lemma="should">should
it of">out of </w><w type="
</w><w type="NN1" lemma="
nt to">pursuant to </w><w
="CJC" lemma="and">and </
e </w><w type="AJ0" ler
>c type="PUL"></c
ulations </w>
--H.5T0"
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have control

Results of your search

Your query was

have control of

Only 25 solutions found for this query

[A2H](#) 35 'Men with big company cars, big mortgages, big family commitments are prepared to risk all that in order to have control of their own destiny,' he said.

[AJ8](#) 404 Schools have control of their own budgets, with the freedom that entails.

[B7J](#) 704 The question whether man or machine is best fitted to have control of the on-off button will be answered one day, according to the high priesthood of artificial intelligence (AI).

[C9M](#) 721 We have control of where we're going.

[CA5](#) 258 We might believe we are helpless in the arms of fate/God/luck, or that we have control of our own destiny.

[CDU](#) 1332 Mr Kawawa repeated more than once his view that the Arusha Declaration not only permitted the takeover of capitalist concerns but actually called for 'the masses' to have control of the information media.

[EEM](#) 1233 Any claim of the clergy to have control of one's spiritual destiny was effectively undermined.

[FAM](#) 323 This stance is premised on the view that effective change depends on the genuine commitment of those required to implement it, and that commitment can only be achieved if those involved feel that they have control of the process.

[FUK](#) 276 The only thing I didn't have control of w were the rates we're charging.

[G3R](#) 750 The British sent troops to defend the Abadan refinery and made a secret deal with the Russians whereby at the end of the war the Russians would have control of Istanbul and the Dardanelles, and Iran would be divided between them, the Russians in the North, the British in the South, and the British influential in the "neutral" zone, where the oil was to be founded.

take control

Results of your search

Your query was

take control of

Here is a random selection of 50 solutions from the 110 found.

[AIY 180](#) However, the conference overwhelmingly rejected attempts from the left to commit the party to a major extension of public ownership, and to take control of at least one leading company in each of the main manufacturing sectors.

[ABE 3206](#) Queens of the North African *Bothrio myrmex* decapitans take control of colonies of *Tapinoma* ants.

[ACA 475](#) Men might reject the guiding hand of Providence and increasingly take control of their own lives, but death, when it came to them or their loved ones, had the same countenance that had frightened their ancestors.

[ACL 1063](#) Indeed, the idea that women might take control of their desire to the point where men come to be judged as objects of pleasure is felt to be so threatening as to be tabooed.

[ADK 1345](#) When the Left want to take control of a particular constituency, they look at its controlling group and note that over a six-month period the maximum number of people attending the decision-making meetings is never more than (say) twenty-seven.

[AE9 462](#) A 'revolutionary committee' of barons seemed about to take control of the central government: the forest would have had short shrift from them.

[AK9 511](#) The scale of Fujimori's problem was highlighted as troops moved to take control of Lima's Castro Castro prison, where the high-security rating is no more than a wistful reminder of an architect's intentions.

[AKY 504](#) The alliance of his Serbian-dominated federal forces and Serb irregulars was expected to take control of Visegrad last night, after poorly-armed and outnumbered Muslim defenders fled to the hills.

[ALK 426](#) The issue was settled in favour of the Restorationists when General Monk decided to intervene and brought the Northern Army, under his command, to take control of the situation in London during February 1660.

First, decide which of the following statements are *not* grammatically possible. (Put a cross in the box next to each one.)

That could be Dr Smith at the door.

That should be Dr Smith at the door.

That can be Dr Smith at the door.

That might be Dr Smith at the door.

That will be Dr Smith at the door.

That may be Dr Smith at the door.

That shall be Dr Smith at the door.

That must be Dr Smith at the door.

That would be Dr Smith at the door.

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That would be Dr Smith at the door.

Now order the remaining sentences according to degrees of certainty: 1 – most certain; 2 – next most certain... etc.

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That would be Dr Smith at the door.

Now order the remaining sentences according to degrees of certainty: 1 – most certain; 2 – next most certain... etc.

That could be Dr Smith at the door.	Equal 4th
That should be Dr Smith at the door.	3rd
That might be Dr Smith at the door.	5th
That will be Dr Smith at the door.	1st
That may be Dr Smith at the door.	Equal 4th
That must be Dr Smith at the door.	2nd