

## MODAL VERBS

### FORM AND USE

- Modals do not take a final **-s**, even when the subject is *she, he, it* (***She can do it.***). The only exception is ***have to: She has to do it.***
- Modals have the same form in all persons.
- Modals are followed immediately by the simple form of a verb. (*She can do it.*)
- There is no *do* or *does* in questions or negative phrases. (*She can do it. – Can she do it? – She cannot do it.*) The only exception is ***have to: She doesn't have to do it. – Does she have to do it?***

Modal verbs	Czech translation	Use
can can't		<b>ability:</b> Sue <i>can</i> dance quite well but she <i>can't</i> sing.  <b>permission:</b> You <i>can't</i> come in here. <i>Can</i> we go home now?
must need not		<b>necessity/obligation:</b> You <i>must</i> clean your room.  <b>lack of necessity:</b> He <i>needn't</i> come.
have to/has to don't have to/doesn't have to		<b>necessity/obligation:</b> You can't turn right. You <i>have to</i> turn left.  = <b>it's not necessary:</b> We <i>don't have to</i> wear a uniform at my school.
mustn't		= <b>it is necessary that you do not do it, you can't, it's prohibited/negative obligation:</b> You must keep it a secret. You <i>mustn't</i> tell anyone.
should shouldn't		<b>something is/isn't a good idea/the right thing to do (to give advice, to make suggestion):</b> You look tired. You <i>should</i> go to bed. You <i>shouldn't</i> watch TV.
would would not		<b>a hypothetical action or event in the present:</b> I <i>would</i> go there if I had time. (But I don't have it.)
may, might may not, might not		= <b>it's possible:</b> It <i>may/might</i> be true.  = <b>perhaps it isn't true:</b> I'm not sure whether I can lend you any money. I <i>may not</i> have enough.

## PRACTICE

### 1 Choose the correct completion.

- 1 Mary can \_\_\_\_\_ to the meeting.  
a) comes          b) to come          c) come
- 2 Jack should \_\_\_\_\_ harder.  
a) studies          b) study          c) to study
- 3 The whole team must \_\_\_\_\_ together in order to win the game.  
a) work          b) worked          c) works
- 4 You have \_\_\_\_\_ an umbrella when you go out. It looks like it's going to rain.  
a) take          b) taken          c) to take
- 5 We have a lot of food in the fridge so you needn't \_\_\_\_\_ shopping.  
a) to go          b) going          c) go

### 2 Complete the sentences. Use *must*, *mustn't*, *don't/doesn't have to*.

- 1 We haven't got much time. We \_\_\_\_\_ hurry.
- 2 We have enough food at home so we \_\_\_\_\_ go shopping today.
- 3 Jim gave me a letter to post yesterday. I \_\_\_\_\_ remember to post it today.
- 4 Jim gave me a letter to post yesterday. I \_\_\_\_\_ forget to post it today.
- 5 There is plenty of time for you to make up your mind. You \_\_\_\_\_ decide now.
- 6 Jane \_\_\_\_\_ wash those tomatoes. They've already been washed.

### 3 Complete the sentences. Use *mustn't* or *needn't*.

- 1 The windows aren't very dirty. You \_\_\_\_\_ clean them.
- 2 Keep these documents in a safe place. You \_\_\_\_\_ lose them.
- 3 We \_\_\_\_\_ forget to turn off the lights before we leave.
- 4 I \_\_\_\_\_ write the letter now. I can do it tomorrow.

### 4 Put a form of *have to* or *should* into each gap. Sometimes the verb forms are negative.

- 1 Your hair is too long. I think you \_\_\_\_\_ get it cut.
- 2 You smell, and you've got a cough. You \_\_\_\_\_ smoke.
- 3 I'm going to bed. I \_\_\_\_\_ be up early tomorrow.
- 4 I'd like to meet your boyfriend. You \_\_\_\_\_ invite him round.
- 5 You \_\_\_\_\_ come with me if you don't want to. I'll go on my own.
- 6 You \_\_\_\_\_ tell lies. It's naughty.

**5 Choose the correct completion according to the meaning.**

1 She got the job because she \_\_\_\_\_ speak five languages.

- a. must**                      **b. can**

2 “I have a toothache.” “You \_\_\_\_\_ go to a doctor.”

- a. would**                      **b. should**

3 They \_\_\_\_\_ finish the bridge in time for the holiday traffic.

- a. might**                      **b. would**

4 I \_\_\_\_\_ go any farther. I am exhausted.

- a. cannot**                      **b. may not**

5 If you asked me nicely, I \_\_\_\_\_ buy you that sweater.

- a. may**                          **b. would**

6 You \_\_\_\_\_ make so much noise. He is trying to concentrate.

- a. wouldn't**                      **b. shouldn't**

7 It \_\_\_\_\_ rain this evening. Why don't you take an umbrella?

- a. must**                          **b. might**

8 “I need some help with this table. \_\_\_\_\_ you lift the other end, please?”

“Sure, just a second.”

- a. would**                          **b. may**

Further practice on:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/english-grammar/verbs/modal-verbs/ability-permission-requests-and-advice>