

GRAMMAR

MODAL VERBS (1)

Modal verbs: *can, could, may, might*
Modal phrases: *to be able to*

I. ABILITY: *can, could, be able to*

Time reference + meaning	Affirmative	Negative
Present ability / inability	can = am / is / are able <i>He can run fast. = He is able to run fast. (может, умеет)</i>	cannot (can't) = am / is / are not able = am / is / are unable <i>He cannot (can't) run fast. = He is not able (is unable) to run fast. (не может, не умеет)</i>

Time reference + meaning	Affirmative	Negative
Past ability / inability	could <i>He could run fast. = He was able to run fast. (мог, умел, был в состоянии)</i>	could not (couldn't) = was / were not able = was / were unable <i>He couldn't stop laughing. = He was not able (was unable) to stop laughing. (не мог / не смог / был не в состоянии)</i>
Past ability + successful performance of an action on one occasion	was / were able <i>He was finally able to set a record. = could and did set a record (смог, сумел)</i>	—



Note:

Can and **could** (NOT "be able to") are usually used with "feel", "hear", "see", "smell", "taste", "understand", "remember", etc.

*We **can** hear the sounds of music.*

Мы слышим (**можем** слышать) звуки музыки.

*He **could** understand everything they said to him.*

Он понял (**мог** понять) всё, что они ему сказали.

When you talk about ability to do smth on one occasion and want to emphasise the difficulty or suggest a great effort, you can use **manage to**.

II. ASKING FOR AND GIVING PERMISSION: *can, could, may, might, would*

ASKING FOR ASSISTANCE: *can, could, will, would*

	Polite question	Polite answers	
Asking for and giving permission	Can / Could / May I please use your cell phone?	Yes, here you are. Of course. Certainly.	I'm sorry, I need it myself.
	Do you think I could possibly leave early today?	Yes, of course you can.	I'm sorry, you can't . I'm afraid not. There's a lot of work to do.
	Would it be all right if I bring / brought my bike inside?	Go ahead. Certainly.	I'd rather you didn't.
	I wonder if I could/ might borrow this book?	Yes, of course.	I'm afraid not. Well, I'm reading it myself, actually.

	Polite question	Polite answers	
Asking for Assistance	Can / Could / Will/ Would you please open the window for me?	Yes, of course. I'd be glad to.	I'm sorry, it's a bit cold in here.
	I'm sorry to trouble you, but could you please lend me some money?	Yes, here you are. Certainly.	I'm afraid, I haven't got any.
	Would you mind taking a photo of us?	No, of course not.	I'm sorry, I'm afraid I can't.



Note: **Can, could** and **may** are used to ask for permission in direct questions. When you report these questions in the past, you use **could** (NOT "can" or "may").
e.g. **Can / Could / May** I please use your cell phone? → He asked if he **could** use my cell phone.

However, to talk about giving or refusing permission on a specific occasion in the past, **was / were allowed** is used (NOT "could").

e.g. He **was / was not allowed** to use the cell phone. (NOT "He could / could not use the cell phone.")

III. POSSIBILITY: *can* and *could, may* and *might*

1. General possibility.

Verbs used: **can** and **could** with be to talk about typical situations in the present and in the past.

Present

Scotland **can** be very warm in September

В Шотландии может быть (бывает) очень тепло в сентябре.

Past

George **could** be quite unpleasant at times.

Джордж временами мог быть (бывал) весьма неприятен.

2. Specific possibility.

Verbs used: **may**, **might** or **could** (NOT "can") to talk about a specific situation which the speaker sees as possible at the moment of speaking or in the future, but he is not certain.

	Present	Future
50% sure	<p>Who knows, I may / might / could be wrong. (= Perhaps I am wrong)</p> <p>Как знать, может быть, я и ошибаюсь.</p>	<p>They may / might / could visit Italy again in June. (= Perhaps they will visit Italy)</p> <p>Возможно (может быть), они опять поедут в Италию в июне.</p>
	<p>He <u>wondered</u> if he might be too young for the job.</p> <p>Он <u>спрашивал</u> себя, не может ли быть, что он слишком молод для этой работы.</p>	<p>He <u>said</u> he might buy a new computer soon.</p> <p>Он <u>сказал</u>, что, возможно, скоро купит новый компьютер.</p>

Might and **could** express a weaker possibility than **may**. Besides, **may** is slightly more formal.

Compare:

They **may** leave tomorrow.
(= Perhaps they will)

They **might/could** leave tomorrow.
(=I don't think they will)

3. Negative possibility.

Verbs used: **may not** and **might not** (NOT "cannot / could not")

	Present	Future
50% sure	<p>He may / might not have the slightest idea about it.</p> <p>Может быть, он не имеет об этом ни малейшего представления.</p>	<p>They may / might not reach agreement tomorrow.</p> <p>Возможно, завтра они не достигнут согласия.</p>

4. Impossibility.

Verbs used: **cannot** or **can't** (usually with the verb "to be") (NOT "may not / might not")

	Present
95% sure	<p>Ann cannot be here. She is in Italy now. Невозможно, чтобы Анна была здесь. Она сейчас в Италии.</p> <p>That can't be George. George isn't so tall. Не может быть, чтобы это был Джордж. Джордж не такой высокий.</p>

5. Emotionally coloured QUESTIONS expressing doubt, disbelief, annoyance, etc.

Verbs used: **can** and **could**

Can / could she really be over thirty?

What else **can / could** you possibly want?

Неужели ей действительно за тридцать?

Чего, **собственно**, вы ещё хотите?

MODAL VERBS (2)

Modal verbs: *must, needn't, should, ought to*
Modal phrases: *to have to, to have got to, need to, had better, be to*

I. OBLIGATION: *must, have to / have got to*

Modals	Uses	Examples	Translation
Must	1. Obligation that comes from the speaker	<i>I must give up smoking. (I want to)</i>	должен
	2. Public notices and documents expressing commands (written and formal English)	<i>Application forms must be returned to the office within 15 days.</i>	должен, обязан
	3. Strong recommendation, emphatic advice	<i>You must see the Picasso exhibition.</i>	должен, непременно нужно
Have to	Obligation that comes from "outside"	<i>I have to give up smoking. (My doctor wants me to)</i>	должен, вынужден, приходится
Have got to	<u>Single actions!</u> (informal English)	<i>I've got to see a doctor. Have you got to leave now? I haven't got to work tomorrow.</i>	должен, нужно



Notes:

1. **Have to** (NOT "have got to") is usually used to talk about repeated actions, especially with such adverbs as *often, always, usually, sometimes* and *regularly*.

*He **has to** go on business trips fairly regularly.*

*Do you often **have to** get up early on Sundays?*

*I don't usually **have to** wait a long time for a bus.*

Ему постоянно **приходится** ездить в командировки.

Вам часто **приходится** рано вставать по воскресеньям?

Обычно мне **не приходится** долго ждать автобуса.

2. **Had to** (NOT "had got to" or "must") is used to talk about obligation in the past.

*She **had to** spend a night at the airport, didn't she?*

Ей **пришлось** провести ночь в аэропорту, не так ли?

II. *Mustn't* versus *Not have to**

Absence of necessity	Prohibition	Emphatic advice
<p>You don't have to tell her. She knows the news already.</p> <p>Вам не нужно (нет необходимости) сообщать ей новость. Она её уже знает.</p>	<p>You mustn't * tell her. / You can't tell her. The news may upset her.</p> <p>Нельзя сообщать ей новость. Она её может расстроить.</p>	<p>You mustn't get upset.</p> <p>Ну не расстраивайся!</p>



Note:

* In spoken English **must not** is usually avoided when you speak to or about another adult. **Can't** is normally used instead.

e.g. You **can't** leave until I say so.

III. ABSENCE of NECESSITY: *needn't, don't need to, didn't need to, needn't have (done)*

PRESENT

Modals	Uses	Examples
Needn't	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker expresses his personal opinion that something is not necessary. The speaker gives permission not to do something. 	<p>We needn't hurry. We have plenty of time.</p> <p>You needn't come if you are busy.</p>

Modals	Uses	Examples
Don't need to	The speaker talks about a general necessity.	<p>You don't need to have a visa to go to Turkey.</p> <p>He does not need to pay the fare. — He is an old age pensioner.</p>



Note:

When **need** is a modal verb, it is never used in affirmative sentences and is most often used in the negative and sometimes in questions.

e.g. **Need I repeat it?** **Нужно ли / к чему** это повторять?

PAST

Didn't need to	Needn't have done
Something was not necessary and usually it was not done	Someone did something which was not necessary
<i>I didn't need to cook any food. I was leaving that night.</i> Мне не надо было (не было необходимости) готовить еду. Вечером того дня я уезжал.	<i>I needn't have cooked so much food. My friends called and said they were not coming.</i> Напрасно (зря) я приготовил столько еды. Друзья позвонили мне и сказали, что не придут.

IV. **ADVICE and RECOMMENDATION:** *should, ought to, had better*

Modals	Uses	Examples / Translation
Should Ought to	advice / opinion	<i>I think you should / ought to get some sleep.</i> Я думаю, тебе нужно (следует) немного поспать. Should smoking be forbidden in public places? Следует ли запретить курить в общественных местах? <i>The medicine shouldn't be used for more than 3 months.</i> Лекарство не следует принимать более трёх месяцев.

Modals	Uses	Examples / Translation
Should have (done) Ought to have (done)	criticism about some past action	<i>They should have/ ought to have followed his advice.</i> Им следовало (надо было) последовать его совету. <i>You shouldn't have/ ought not to have told her the sad news.</i> Вам не следовало (вы не должны были) сообщать ей печальную новость.
Had better	strong advice <u>in a particular situation</u>	<i>You'd better hurry up, otherwise you will be late for work.</i> Тебе лучше поспешить, если ты не хочешь опоздать на работу. <i>You'd better not show this letter to anybody.</i> Тебе лучше никому не показывать это письмо.



Note:

Had better suggests that if the advice / warning is not followed there might be some unpleasant consequences. The meaning is present and future, not past.

V. BE + "to"-infinitive

Uses	Example	Translation
Arrangements for the future	<i>A seminar is to be held in October.</i> <i>They were to get married in June.</i>	Семинар должен состояться в октябре. Они должны были пожениться в июне.
Orders and instructions	<i>This form is to be filled in and returned within 10 days.</i>	Анкету нужно заполнить и сдать в течение 10 дней.

Indirect commands	<i>She says that such people are not to be trusted. (strict prohibition)</i> <i>I was to destroy the document as soon as I'd read it.</i>	Она говорит, что таким людям нельзя доверять. Я должен был (был проинструктирован) уничтожить документ сразу же после прочтения.
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Exercise 1.

- I _____ (do) the job immediately. It didn't take up much of my time.
- When he was young he _____ (run) faster than anyone else.
- He _____ (finally / run) the distance incredibly (невероятно) fast and set a record.
- I _____ (find out) why they had left so unexpectedly.
- She _____ (sing) like a bird when she was a child.
- We _____ (finally / to persuade) our parents to let us go on the trip.
- Every time he opened his mouth, you _____ (hear) him say something tactless.
- Cindy _____ (remember) quite well that she had been promised a pay rise.
- The main road was under repair, but we _____ (find) an alternative route.
- The accused man _____ (feel) that the jury didn't really believe his story.
- After she had a good sleep she _____ (work out) the problem.
- At last he _____ (overcome) his fear and felt much better afterwards.

Exercise 2.

1. Хотя Эдвард испытывал денежные затруднения, он всё же сумел расплатиться с долгами.
2. Роджер сумел извлечь большую пользу из своей стажировки (internship).
3. Она умела найти нужные слова и убедить кого угодно в чём угодно.
4. Он сумел скопить необходимую сумму, чтобы оплатить расходы на лечение (медицинские расходы).
5. Марк смог произвести очень хорошее впечатление на нашего директора.
6. Я понимал (мог понять), почему он отказался давать показания в суде.
7. После долгих переговоров они смогли достичь согласия и прекратили военные действия.
8. Саймон мог быть очень терпеливым с детьми. Что касается меня, то они быстро выводили меня из терпения.
9. Я видел (мог видеть), что он не прилагает никаких усилий, чтобы оставаться в хорошей форме.
10. По-моему, этот ребёнок мог пользоваться компьютером, когда ещё не умел ходить!

Exercise 3.

1. After looking at her notes again, she _____ (complete) the exercise.
2. Finally, we _____ (gain) his trust and (to keep) him on the phone long enough to trace his call.
3. I _____ (not to accept) the fact that my son thought only of playing football.
4. I finally _____ (lose) 40 pounds after months of eating low-fat foods.
5. In Omaha, Nebraska, the firefighters _____ (rescue) the boy who fell through the ice about 100 feet from the shoreline.
6. Sally returned home exhausted. She _____ (not to sleep) that night.
7. John _____ (speak) fluently and well: talking with him was one of the pleasures of my life.
8. In Massachusetts Hillary met a girl in a wheelchair, who told her how much she wanted to go to school. She knew she _____ (not to go) because she _____ (not to walk).
9. He _____ (not to decide) what to do next.
10. Through the glass door of the office he _____ (see) a man with a gun.

Exercise 4.

1. Вас не затруднит посмотреть, нет ли сегодня в программе концерта джазовой музыки?
2. Можно я тебя побеспокою (interrupt) на минутку? Ты мне не скажешь, во сколько закрывается аптека?
3. Не будете ли вы так добры, чтобы ответить на несколько вопросов? — Боюсь, что сейчас не смогу. К сожалению, я должен уходить.
4. Он спросил, не может ли он мне чем-нибудь помочь. Я поблагодарил за предложение и вежливо отказался.
5. Вам разрешили бесплатно пользоваться спортивным инвентарём (equipment)? Честно говоря, я не спрашивал разрешения.
6. Прости, сейчас я никак не могу разговаривать. Можно я тебе позвоню вечером?
7. Если вас не затруднит, не могли бы вы ещё раз взглянуть на эти материалы?
8. — Ты бы не мог поддержать мою сумку, пока я буду открывать дверь? — Конечно.
— Спасибо. — Не стоит (благодарности).

Exercise 5.

1. Students at university do not always approve of the teaching methods. (quite critical / sometimes)
2. Winter sports are not necessarily safe. (quite dangerous)
3. It is not easy to achieve unity between nations. (hard / often)
4. Scientific explanations are not always clear. (confusing / often)
5. Her brother was not always polite. (quite rude / sometimes)
6. In Britain, people are not necessarily willing to tell others how much they earn. (unwilling / often)
7. Years ago, travelling was not always fun. (very tiring / often)
8. Such operations are not necessarily painless. (rather painful)
9. Understanding other people's point of view is not always easy. (very difficult)
10. His behaviour was not always pleasant. (annoying / at times)
11. Extreme diets are not always harmless. (harmful / sometimes)
12. Such methods are not necessarily effective. (ineffective / often)

Exercise 6.

1. — What are you going to do tonight? — I haven't yet made any plans. I _____ stay at home or go to the cinema.
2. — Will your headmaster help you if you get into trouble? — Who knows, he _____ help me, but I really don't know for sure.
3. What else _____ you possibly say in your defence?
4. — Do you know how old she is? — I'm not sure, she _____ be younger than she looks.
5. Depending on where they live, people _____ either like or dislike the consequences of global warming and climate change.
6. How _____ you possibly deny your fault if it has been proved beyond any reasonable doubt?
7. — How about joining us for a cup of tea tomorrow night? — That sounds great but I _____ not be free tomorrow.
8. Money is very much on his mind at the moment. I don't know where he'll get it but he _____ even sell his property.
9. Let's not wait any longer. Bob _____ come too late or _____ not turn up at all.
10. _____ you really believe that coming to agreement will be as easy as some people imagine?
11. He was not sure at all that his interference (вмешательство) would make things better. He was afraid it _____ even make them worse.
12. Diana _____ like the dress you've bought for her. But frankly speaking, I don't think she will. She is very choosy about her clothes.

Exercise 7.

1. It's hard to understand how they **can** / **may** be so cruel.
2. Without proper treatment, sufferers from tuberculosis of the lung **can** / **might** often be contagious (заразный) all their life.
3. Leslie returned to Washington in low spirits. Where **might** / **could** she possibly find the money for an operation?
4. You **might** / **can** travel fifty thousand miles in America without once tasting a piece of good bread.
5. How **could** / **might** you possibly help people who have lost everything?
6. One day you **can** / **could** become a political commentator, who knows.
7. "I study in the morning. I study before dinner. I study in bed at night until I **can't** / **may** not stay awake any longer," my classmate said.
8. My horoscope said: "Soon you **may** / **can** feel a need to influence people and gain recognition for your talents."
9. He thought that with a lot of luck he **might** / **may** get through to the studio to answer their quiz questions.
10. If you **may** get / **are able to** get organic foods, and **can** / **could** afford them, then try to use these as much as possible.
11. I thought it **might** / **may** be useful to have your views on Ms Smith's evidence.
12. The university is closed now so Paul **may not** / **can't** be there.

Exercise 8.

1. It is a slow process and **must not** / **doesn't have to** be hurried.
2. We **must not** / **don't have to** believe a word he says. I am convinced he is lying.
3. Sorry sir, you **mustn't** / **can't** park your car here. But you can park just over the road.
4. You **must not** / **don't have to** give way to despair. The situation is not hopeless.
5. Children under 5 **must not** / **don't have to** pay to go in.
6. I'm sorry, no, you **mustn't** / **can't** see Bob tonight. He still doesn't feel well.
7. You **can't** / **don't have to** smoke on the underground.
8. When you have visitors your dog **must not** / **doesn't have to** be allowed to jump up on them.
9. She **must not** / **does not have to** hurry; she has plenty of time at her disposal.
10. I **haven't got to go** / **mustn't** go to the embassy in person because I can get the necessary information through the Internet.
11. I woke up and smiled remembering that it was the half term holiday and I **mustn't** / **didn't have to** go to school.
12. I wonder if I could possibly put off making a decision for a week. — No, I'm afraid you **mustn't** / **can't**.

Exercise 9.

1. Джулия пожаловалась, что опоздала на автобус и ей пришлось ждать следующий целый час.
2. В последние месяцы мне пришлось приложить много усилий, чтобы добиться успеха (use a phrasal verb) в университете.
3. Вы обязательно должны послушать, как Джимми играет на пианино. Я уверен, вы получите большое удовольствие.
4. Вам не нужно убеждать меня. Я разделяю вашу точку зрения о необходимости (need for) серьёзной реформы.
5. Как тебе не стыдно! Разве ты не знаешь, что нельзя читать чужие письма и заглядывать (смотреть) в чужие окна?
6. Я благодарен вам за ваше приглашение, но мне придётся отклонить его.
7. — Вам ведь никогда не приходилось зарабатывать на жизнь, не так ли?
— Как только вы можете так говорить? Мне пришлось начать работать, когда мне было 13!
8. Ему не нужно было беспокоиться. У него была надёжная машина.
9. Доктор сказал, что я должен принимать лекарство. Иначе мой кашель может перейти в пневмонию (pneumonia).
10. Нельзя упускать эту возможность. Это шанс, который выпадает один раз в жизни (a chance of a lifetime).
11. Можно ли мне воспользоваться вашим мобильным телефоном? — Боюсь, что нельзя. С ним что-то не в порядке.
12. Не надо нарядно одеваться (to dress up), если идёшь в паб — джинсы и футболка вполне подойдут.

Exercise 10.

Model: I did some extra shopping. → *Really? You needn't have done any extra shopping. We have plenty of food at home.*

1. We weren't sure about the regulations and stayed in our seats during the whole flight.
2. He was so worried about not getting to work on time that he left home very early.
3. She thought she would stay there overnight, and so she took a change of clothes.
4. I was afraid the hotel was booked up, and so I made arrangements with a friend of mine.
5. I was worried about getting stuck in a traffic jam, so I left the car in the car park.
6. We didn't know they serve food and drinks, that's why we took packed lunch.

Exercise 11.

1. Не надо быть гением, чтобы понимать такие вещи.
2. К чему повторять, что я никогда не попрошу его об одолжении?
3. Вы напрасно ждёте его звонка. Он будет занят вплоть до следующей недели и может не позвонить.
4. Вам нет необходимости принимать решение немедленно. Вы можете сообщить его любому из наших туроператоров завтра.
5. Не нужно бояться. Доктор Паркер очень опытный хирург и он успешно сделал уже сотни таких операций.

Exercise 12.

Model: Your friend is driving much faster than other cars. →

You'd better slow down. Otherwise we will / may get into an accident.

She feels lonely and uncomfortable here. →

You should try to make some friends.

1. Your friend is going to drink tap water. You know it's dangerous.
2. Your cousin chose her college under pressure from her parents.
3. Your friend is driving too quickly on a wet road.
4. You are by the pool with a friend. He / she has not used any sun cream.
5. A friend of yours has a television in the room where he spends most of his time.

Exercise 13.

Model: They arranged (agreed) to go swimming tomorrow. →

*They **are to** go swimming tomorrow.*

They arranged (agreed) to go swimming the following day. →

*They **were to** go swimming the following day.*

1. We arranged to meet with their sales manager the next week.
2. They agreed to pay off their debts within a week.
3. Have you arranged with her to go out tonight?
4. The doctor agreed to see Bob on Wednesday.
5. The Queen agreed to visit South Korea next summer.
6. They arranged to hold the first meeting within two weeks. (The first meeting ...)
7. Alice agreed to spend a couple of days at her friends' place.
8. Dick and Paul agreed to share their travelling expenses.
9. We have arranged to take a vacation in winter.
10. The tourists have arranged to see the Vatican first thing in the morning.

