

MODAL VERBS**Indice**

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1 Modal verbs

A small group of auxiliary verbs, called the modal verbs or simply Modals are only used in combination with ordinary verbs. Modal verbs may express prediction, permission, ability, necessity and possibility.

Un piccolo gruppo di verbi ausiliari, chiamati verbi modali o semplicemente modali sono usati in combinazione con i verbi ordinari. I verbi modali possono esprimere: previsione, permesso, abilità, necessità e possibilità.

The principal modal verbs are:

Can

Could

May

Might

Must

Ought

Shall

Should

Will

Would

Modal Verbs

CAN, COULD

MAY, MIGHT

CAN= posso, che io possa, etc.

COULD= potevo, potei, potrei, potessi

MODAL VERBS

MAY= posso, che io possa, etc.

MIGHT= potevo, potei, potrei, potessi.

Queste voci:

- sono seguite da un infinito senza 'to';
- non richiedono l'ausiliare 'to do' nelle forme negativa e interrogativa e interrogativa-negativa;
- non richiedono la -s alla 3a pers. del pres.indicativo.

Examples:

- He can go / He may go.
- He could do that / He might do that.
- Can I do that? / May I do that?

Forma negative di 'can':

Cannot / can't

CAN – COULD indica:

potere fisico, potere intellettuale o morale, diritto;
equivale a 'essere in grado di', 'sapere o poter fare',
avere la forza fisica, morale, intellettuale', 'avere il
diritto'.

Examples:

- He can speak English fluently
- Can you write an English letter?

MAY – MIGHT indica: eventualità, probabilità, augurio, permesso.

Examples:

- You may be mistaken
- This may be true
- May you be happy!
- May I go out? Yes, you may.

La differenza fra Can e May

- **He cannot come** (non è in grado di venire);
- **He may not come** (è possibile che non venga)

Nella forma interrogativa le voci CAN e COULD si usano soprattutto per chiedere un'informazione;

Nella forma interrogativa le voci MAY e MIGHT servono invece per domandare un permesso.

- **Can we visit that church on Sunday?**(informaz.)
- **May I come in?** yes you may (permesso)

Alle voci mancanti di CAN – COULD

si supplisce con la forma **TO BE ABLE TO**:

- I will not be able to talk to him tomorrow.

Alle voci mancanti di MAY – MIGHT

si supplisce con le forme passive **TO BE ALLOWED, TO BE PERMITTED**:

- He was not allowed to talk to him.

Le espressioni: avrei potuto, avresti potuto,ecc.; sarei potuto,

saresti potuto,ecc. si traducono con **COULD** o **MIGHT** e l'infinito passato.

Examples:

- You could have written to me (avresti potuto scrivermi)
- You could have come (saresti potuto venire)
- You might have been mistaken (avresti potuto essere in errore)

CAN – COULD si usano spesso insieme ai verbi di percezione (sostituiscono la forma progressiva)

Examples:

- Hello! Can you hear me?
- I can't see anything from here.

1.1. Can, could, to be able to – Exercise

Write the phrases in their correct forms.

Example: Yesterday I COULD WATCH a film, today I can't. (*can/to watch*)

- 1) Last week we COULD GO swimming, this week we can't. (*can/to go*)
- 2) Maybe the Smiths WILL BE ABLE TO BUILD a new house next year. (*can/to build*)
- 3) If you try hard, you COULD PASS your examinations. (*can/to pass*)
- 4) When I was five, I WAS NOT ABLE TO SWIM (*not/can/to swim*)
- 5) Dennis HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO PLAY the piano recently. (*can/to play*)
- 6) Luke has passed his driving test, now he CAN DRIVE a car. (*can/to drive*)
- 7) You look tired. 'yes I COULDN'T SLEEP last night.' (*not/can/to sleep*)
- 8) Alex CAN'T DO his homework when his desk is in such a mess. (*not/can/to do*)

9) They were so busy, they WERE NOT ABLE TO WRITE me a text message. (*not/can/to write*)

10) Lisa WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MEET ..you on Friday. She CAN MEET you today. (*can/to see/to meet*)

Modal Verbs

2 Must and have to

Dovere

MUST and HAVE TO spesso sono usati alternativamente. C'è comunque una differenza:

‘Must’ si usa per esprimere posizioni personali.

‘Have to’ Si usa per esprimere posizioni impersonali.

Examples:

- **Mary** is a nice person. You **must meet** her (posiz. Pers.)
- John can't go straight on. **He has to** turn left to go home (posiz. non personale)

MUSTN'T, DON'T HAVE TO (hanno significati diversi):

I promised I would be on time(ho promesso di essere in orario).

I mustn't be late (non debbo far tardi).

I'm not working tomorrow, so I don't have to get up early (non c'è bisogno di..., non sono obbligato)

2.1. Exercise on modal verbs and their substitutes

Use modal verbs where possible. If a modal verb can't be used with a certain tense, use its substitute.

1. You (must) _____get up early tomorrow. (**MUST**)
2. You (not / need) _____call a baby sitter. (**DON'T NEED TO**)

3. We (may) _____ watch the film tonight. (**ARE ALLOWED TO**)
4. He (not / can) _____ see me yesterday. (**WAS NOT ABLE TO**)
5. She (must) _____ stay at school yesterday afternoon. (**HAD TO**)
6. (may / you) _____ go to the disco yesterday? (**WERE YOU ALLOWED TO**)
7. He (not / must) _____ sleep now. (**DOESN'T HAVE TO**)
8. You (not / need) _____ answer. (**DON'T NEED TO**)
9. He (ought to) _____ give evidence at the court yesterday. (**HAD TO**)
10. Since he bought the new car he (not / can) _____ sleep. (**HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO**)

EXERCISE(must/pers; have to/non pers.):

1. It is later than I thought. I **must/have to** go home
2. In Great Britain many children **have to** wear a uniform when they go to school.
3. I'm sorry **I couldn't** come yesterday. **I had** to write until late.
4. I don't want anyone to know. You **mustn't** tell anyone.
5. I can stay in bed tomorrow morning, because **I don't have to** go to work.
6. Whatever you do, you **mustn't** open that door. It's very dangerous.
7. Mary **doesn't have to** get up early. She gets up early because she wants to.

2.2. *Must and Can't*

(è probabile, non è possibile)

Incertezza, probabilità

- Mary **must feel** very bored at work. She does the same thing every day.

Impossibilità (non è possibile che...)

- John and Mary **haven't** lived here for very long. They **can't** know many people.

Al passato (probab./incert.)

must have (done), **can't have** (done)

Examples:

The phone rang but Mary didn't hear it: she must have been asleep. (deve essersi addormentata)

John walked straight into the door. He can't have been looking where he was going. (forse...non aveva visto)

Couldn't invece di can't è possibile:

- ...He couldn't have been looking where he was going.
- She couldn't have seen me.

EXAMPLES

- That restaurant **must be** very good. It's always full of people. (deve essere...)
- That restaurant **can't be** very good. It's always empty (non è possibile che sia...).
- John isn't at work today. He **must be** ill.
- John wasn't at work last week. He **must have been** ill.
- John is putting on his coat. He **must be** going out (starà uscendo).
- Mary was in a difficult situation. It **can't have been** easy for her. (forse non era facile..)
- The coat you bought is very good quality. It **must have been** very expensive. (doveva essere...)
- I can't find my umbrella. I **must have** left it in the restaurant last night. (debbo averlo lasciato...)
- John passed the exam without studying a lot. It **can't have been** very difficult. (forse non era così difficile...)

- The light is on. I **must have forgotten** to turn it off yesterday night. (probabilmente ho dimenticato...)

EXERCISE**Choose the correct verb:**

1. To drive a car you...have a driving licence.

A **Must**/B Has to/C Don't have to

2. While you are driving you_____listen to the radio, it is not necessary

A Must/B Don't have/C **Must not**

3. You _____drive without wearing a seatbelt. Wearing a seatbelt is compulsory for the passengers too.

A Must/B Don't have/C **Mustn't**

4. It is dangerous to talk on a cell-phone and drive at the same time. Drivers _____do that.

A Must/B **Shouldn't**/C Should

5. In some countries it is illegal to use a cell-phone in a car, in those countries drivers _____use phones in their cars.

A Don't have to/B Shouldn't/C **Mustn't**

6. Drivers _____be kind to other drivers.

A **Should**/B Must/C Must not

7. But they _____be kind to other drivers, it's a choice not the law.

A Must not/B **Don't have**/C Doesn't have

8. You _____insure your car, it's the law of the country.

Has to/Mustn't/**Have to**

9. On the road you _____respect the speed limit even if there isn't any radar.

Must/Don't have to/Must not

10. Cyclists _____wear a helmet but a cautious rider should have one.

Mustn't/Must/**Don't have to**

EXERCISE:

Expressing advice: *SHOULD, OUGHT TO, and HAD BETTER.*

Spot the mistake then rewrite the sentence correctly.

1. You will better not be late. **You had better not to be late.**

2. Anna shouldn't wears shorts into the restaurant. **Anna shouldn't wear shorts into the restaurant.**

3. I should to go to the post office today. **I shouldn't go to the post office today.**

4. I ought paying my bills today. **I ought to pay my bills today.**

5. You'd had better to call the doctor today. **You had better to call the doctor today.**

6. You don't should stay up too late tonight. **You shouldn't stay up too late tonight.**

7. You'd to better not leaving your key in the car. **You'd better not to leave your key in the car.**

8. Mr.Smith should to visit his relatives tomorrow. Mr. Smith should visit his relatives tomorrow.

3 To make / to do

Fare

FARE: TO MAKE / TO DO

TO MAKE (produrre costruire, realizzare,) di solito è seguito dal complemento oggetto

TO DO (fare) di solito riferito ad azioni astratte e intellettuali.

La scelta non è sempre facile perché sono molte le costruzioni idiomatiche:

TO MAKE:

- to make a bargain
- to make a friend
- to make a purchase
- to make the acquaintance of
- to make a speech
- to make a mistake
- to make war/peace
- to make a promise
- to make a choice
- to make a noise
- to make an effort,
- to make a will (testamento)
- to make a vow (voto)
- to make a phone call

to make sense

to make trouble

to make plans

to make a mess

to make fun (of)

to make fortune

to make an excuse

to make a discovery

to make a decision

to make the bed

to make lunch\dinner

TO DO:

To do good/evil

To do a thing

To do a favour

To do justice

To do a work

To do without

To do the honour

To do one's utmost

To do a service

to do the cooking

to do a course

to do damage

to do an exercise\ a test

to do the gardening

to do homework\ housework

to do the ironing

to do a job

to do the shopping

to do the washing up

Exercise

MAKE OR DO?

1. To _____ a thing
2. To _____ a favour
3. To _____ a promise
4. To _____ a bargain
5. To _____ an errand
6. To _____ an effort
7. To _____ a speech
8. To _____ a work
9. To _____ a mistake
10. To _____ a will

1.do 2.do 3.make 4.make 5.do 6.make 7.make 8.do 9.make 10.make

3.1. «Fare» reso con altri verbi

To keep waiting (fare aspettare);
to pay attention (fare attenzione);
to run into debt (fare debiti);
to put a question
(fare una domanda);
to have one's own way
(fare a modo proprio);
to play the fool (fare lo sciocco);
to take a step (fare un passo);
to pay a visit to/to call on
(fare una visita a);
to have a haircut (farsi tagliare i capelli);
to have a shave (farsi la barba);
To ask a question
(fare una domanda);
to wait to be told a second time
(farselo dire due volte).

EXERCISE

Choose the right option: “wait to be told a second time”, “have a shave”, “ have a haircut “, “run into debt”, “ play the fool”, “pay attention“, “pay a visit “.

1. That student is very attentive, he always PAYS ATTENTION during the lessons.

MODAL VERBS

2. Mum is always so efficient, when you need something she doesn't _WAIT TO BE TOLD
A SECOND TIME.
3. Can you answer the phone please? Daddy is in the bathroom _HAVING A SHAVE.
4. My hair are so messy! I definitely need to _HAVE A HAIRCUT
5. Even though his salary is not so high, three years ago Michael bought a very expensive flat and now he ____RUNS INTO DEBT.
6. Come on, be serious, don't ...PLAY THE FOOL!
7. When she walks she never ..PAYS ATTENTION to the ground, and finally she sprained her ankle.(..contuse la caviglia...)
8. My grandmother broke her leg, We really ..SHOULD PAY A VISIT to her as soon as possible.

Answer key:

- 1.pays attention 2. wait to be told a second time 3. having a shave 4. have a haircut 5. runs into debt 6. don't play the fool 7. pays attention 8. should pay a visit

3.2. «Fare» seguito dall'infinito

con l'infinito attivo:

TO LET, LET, LET (lasciare, permettere)

Examples:

- Let me see your dress;
- Let me know if Mary comes

TO MAKE, MADE, MADE (indurre, imporre, causare)

Examples:

- Make him study
- Don't make me cry

Fare in modo che ...

TO HAVE oppure TO GET, GOT, GOT (fare in modo, procurare che, preoccuparsi che, ecc.)

Examples:

I must **have him come** every week

(devo farlo venire ogni settimana, debbo fare in modo che venga)

I must **get John to help** me (devo farmi aiutare da J.)

FARE...

Cfr. : **to let, to make, to have** reggono l'accusativo e l'infinito

senza 'to'; **to get** vuole il 'to'.

In molti casi il verbo FARE può essere sostituito da:

- **to cause** (causare, provocare)
- **to compel** (costringere)
- **to arrange for** (disporre che)
- **to order** (dare ordini che)

Fare...

Examples

- **We compelled** him to speak to Mary
- His arrival caused me to put off my departure (il suo arrivo mi fece differire la partenza)
- The general ordered his troops to advance.

«FARE»

- **TO CAUSE, TO COMPEL, TO ARRANGE FOR, TO ALLOW** trovano applicazione anche in casi come:
 - His impudence caused him to be despised by everybody. (...lo fece disprezzare da...)
 - Arrange for a taxi to be sent here to-night
(fate mandare qui un t...)
 - I allowed him to be given a week's leave (gli feci dare una settimana di permesso)

3.3. «Fare» seguito dall'infinito passivo

TO LET (lasciare) con inf. pass. senza 'to'

- Let him be praised. He deserved that (che sia premiato, lo meritava)

TO HAVE, TO GET (fare in modo che, ottenere, procurare) seguito dal participio passato:

- Have this suitcase **taken** to the station. (fai portare questa valigia alla stazione)
- Get this book **translated** by John (fatti tradurre questo libro da J.)

TO MAKE si usa con i verbi di significato riflessivo e in casi particolari:

- He never makes himself **understood** when he speaks English (non si fa mai capire quando...)
- I made my voice **heard** (feci sentire la mia voce); I make myself respected (mi faccio rispettare)

FARE con valore passivo

TO MAKE in forma passiva seguito dall'infinito può esser tradotto anche con **TO BE**

ALLOWED (permettere) seguito dal 'to'

Examples:

- He was made to see (gli fu fatto vedere)

- He was allowed to sit (lo fecero sedere)

Choose the right option:

To take; to do; to put questions, to make, to let, to allow; to get:

1. I told him not ... that step (gli dissi di non fare quel passo), but he didn't listen to me. Now he is ruined and I can... nothing for him.
2. You can ... to Mr. B. after the lecture.
3. You must ... John study hard if you want him to pass the examination.
4. ... him understand that I agree with him.
5. You mustn't ... anyone to interfere with your life.
6. ... them come whenever they like, we are always so pleased to see them.
7. The thieves were able to escape, but we will soon... the whole police to search every corner and find them out.
8. him do it even if he doesn't want to
9. All those who visit the Tower of Pisa wish ... their photos on it.
10. I hope you ... things known before time.

EXERCISES

Answer key:

- 1. to take...do 2. put questions 3. make
- 4. let him understand 5. allow 6. let 7. get
- 8. make 9. to get...taken
- 10. won't make.

4 Autovalutazione

Test di autovalutazione

1. He ...speak French fluently

- (can/could/might/may)

2. Last week we..go swimming, this week I can't.

- (could/can/may/might)

3. Today I can stay in bed, because I ..to go to work.

- (have/ don't have/can't/could)

4. John...feel very bored at work. She does the same thing every day.

- (must/can/can't/has to/

5. The light is off. I ...forgotten to turn it on yesterday night.

- (must have/can't have/have/had'nt)

6. He always...attention during the lessons.

- (has/pays/have/pay)

7. Ihim come every week.

- (must to have/ must have/have/must get)

8. His answer...him to be looked at by everybody.

- (compelled/ caused/ arraged for/allowed)

9. Mary never...herself understood when she speaks Italian.

- (let/makes/has/gets)

10. ..him come whenever he likes, we are always so pleased to see him.

- (make/let/do/get

Risposte esatte

Answer key:

- 1. can 2. could 3. don't have
- 4. must 5. must have
- 6. pays 7. must have 8. caused
- 9. makes 10. Let