

Modal verb	Function	Form in Present/Future	Form in Past
Can	Ability Ask for or give permission Show impossibility	<i>I <u>can</u> speak Japanese</i> <i><u>Can</u> I call you later?</i> <i>You <u>can</u> go when you finish the exam.</i> <i>John <u>can't</u> be sick. I saw him a few minutes ago.</i>	<i>I <u>could</u> speak some French when I was younger.</i>
Could	Past ability Ask a polite question Show possibility	<i><u>Could</u> I borrow your pen?</i> <i>Why is Marie not here? She <u>could</u> be busy.</i>	<i>I <u>could</u> run faster when I was a child.</i> <i>Why wasn't Marie at the party last night? She <u>could have been</u> busy.</i>
May	Ask for or give permission (formal) Show possibility	<i><u>May</u> I call you later?</i> <i>You <u>may</u> leave as soon as you finish.</i> <i>Beck <u>may</u> come late to class today.</i>	<i>Beck <u>may have come</u> late to class yesterday.</i>
Might	Show possibility	<i>He <u>might</u> be absent today.</i>	<i>He <u>might have been</u> absent yesterday.</i>
Should	Give advice Show (soft) obligation Show expectation	<i>You <u>should</u> try that new restaurant.</i> <i>I <u>should</u> renew my driver's license.</i> <i>I <u>should</u> pass the exam.</i>	<i>We <u>should have tried</u> that new restaurant (but we didn't) - regret</i> <i>I <u>should have renewed</u> my driver's license, but I forgot.</i> <i>I <u>should have passed</u> the exam, but I didn't. (expectation is not realized)</i>
Ought to (similar to should)	Give advice Show obligation	<i>Everyone <u>ought to</u> exercise regularly.</i> <i>You <u>ought to</u> register for the</i>	<i>I <u>ought to have exercised</u> more regularly (but I didn't)</i>

		<i>next course.</i>	
Must	Show obligation/necessity Show prohibition Show certainty	<i>I <u>must</u> call my parents tonight.</i> <i>You <u>must not</u> smoke in class at any time.</i> <i>Jane <u>must be</u> tired. She didn't sleep well.</i>	<i>I was late because I <u>had to</u> call my parents.</i> <i>You <u>were not allowed</u> to smoke in class.</i> <i>Jane <u>must have been</u> tired yesterday.</i>
Have to	Show obligation/necessity Certainty Don't have to	<i>She <u>has to</u> exercise more to lose weight.</i> <i>This <u>has to be</u> the correct solution.</i> <i>Not necessary</i>	<i>She <u>had to</u> exercise more to lose weight.</i>
Will	Make a promise Ask a polite question/ request Instant decision	<i>I'll call you tonight.</i> <i><u>Will</u> you help me with these heavy boxes?</i> <i>It's sunny, so I'll <u>go</u> to work on foot.</i>	
Would	Ask a polite question Ask for permission	<i><u>Would</u> you please call me later tonight?</i> <i><u>Would it be OK</u> if I left a bit earlier today?</i>	