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## Modal Verbs

Overview: Modal verbs are a type of auxiliary (or “helping”) verb. A modal verb modifies the meaning of the main verb that follows it. The main verb that follows a modal verb stays in the base form. Unlike helping verbs, modal verbs cannot act alone; that is, they can never function as the main verb in a sentence, so they are always paired with another verb.

## Modal Verbs

- Can expresses ability/used in questions
- Could past tense of can/expresses possibility
- May- expresses possibility/used for asking permission
- Might- expresses possibility
- Must- expresses necessity

The baby <del>may</del> use her pacifier now.	The baby's nap time <del>must</del> change.
The baby <del>should</del> take her nap now.	The baby <del>would</del> like to be held.
The baby <del>will</del> go to preschool when she's older.	

Note that the verbs immediately following the modal verb are the main verbs in the sentence and remain in the simple present tense. This is generally true for all modal verbs, UNLESS you are using a modal verb phrase which often changes the verb tense.

## Modal Verb Phrases

Modal verb phrases combine the modal verb with one or more helping verbs, which is why the tense of the main verb changes.

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Modal verb + “have” + past tense verb

Margie should have taken the brownies home.

Modal verb + “have” + “been” + [verb + ing]

The mother must have been wondering where her children ran off to.

Modal verb + “have” + “to” + verb

Robert will have to buy diapers to come to daycare.