

Lesson 20. Future Modal Verbs

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Learning Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Review modal verbs rules.
- Identify different future modal verbs.
- Determine the functions of different future modal verbs.
- Express degrees of **certainty**, **probability** or **possibility** of an event in the future.

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The previous lesson dealt with past modal verbs. This lesson focuses on the use of modal auxiliary verbs for the future.

can **could** **may** **must** **might** **should**
have to **will** **would** **ought to**

All of them (except for *NEED*) can express degrees of **certainty**, **probability** or **possibility** of an event. But they can also express ideas such as **willingness** and **ability**, **permission** and **refusal**, **obligation** and **prohibition**, **suggestion**, **necessity**, **promise** and **intention**.

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Modal Verbs - Main Points To Remember

- A. Modals come first in a verb group.



I think it **will** be rather boring.

- B. All modals (except ought) are followed by the base form of the verb.



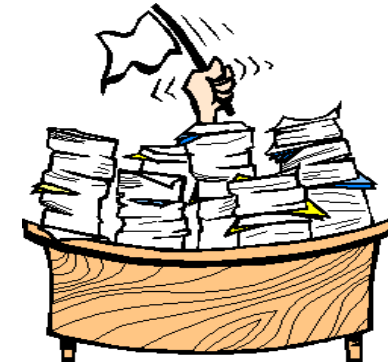
They **might** be home tomorrow.

- C. Ought is followed by a "to" infinitive.



She **ought to** go out with Tom.

- D. Modals have only one form - they don't change from first, to second, to third person like other verbs.



I'm sure he **can** do it tomorrow.

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1. **WILL** and **WON'T** are used to predict a **future event** or **action** which are seen as **certain**. The truth or certainty of what is asserted is more or less taken for granted.

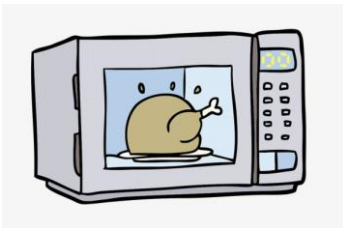


I'm sure he'll be a successful lawyer one day.

His latest book **won't** be out next month. We have to wait a little longer.



2. **WILL** and **WON'T** are also used to express what we believe or guess to be true **about the present**. They indicate **an assumption** based on our knowledge of people and things, their routine, character and qualities.



Don't take the meat out of the oven. It **won't** be ready yet.

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3. **MAY** expresses the possibility that something will happen or is already happening.



We **may** go to Spain this year. We haven't decided yet.

A - "Where's Sandra?"

B - "I don't know. She **may be** having a bath".



4. **MIGHT**, like may, expresses possibility, but is more tentative and slightly less certain.



I **might** not be back in time for supper, so don't wait for me.



It **might** rain. Take your umbrella.

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5. **CAN** is used to indicate that there is a very real possibility of a future event happening.



We **can** stay with Jessica in London (we will be able to stay)

6. **COULD** expresses the theoretical possibility of something happening. It is used in a similar way to *might*.



It **could** be expensive to keep a dog (if we had one, it could or it may not be expensive)

7. **Could not** is not used to express a future possibility. The negative of could is **MIGHT NOT**.



It **might not** be right.

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8. **Will have to, have to** and **must** convey the idea that an action is going to be necessary in the near future. The negative forms are **will not** and **do not have to**.



The movie starts at 9:00 and it's already 8:15. We **will have to leave** soon, or we will miss the beginning.

There's no hurry. The movie doesn't start until 9:00, and it's only 6:45. We **do not have to leave** for a while yet.

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9. **Should** and **ought to** convey the idea that something is expected in the future.



As far as I know, the ferry is running on schedule. We **should arrive** in Vancouver in about an hour.



Let's stop by their house on the way home. They **ought to be** home by the time we get there.

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Choose the best word/s to complete the sentences.

1. Jill hasn't been feeling too well lately. She ____ able to attend the party on Friday night. (must not be, may not be, maybe not)
2. If the package is to arrive on time, we ____ mail it before the weekend. (will probably, will have to, couldn't)
3. It's fortunate that you are here to give me a hand. Without your help, I ____ on time (probably won't finish, couldn't have, have to finish)
4. PERSON A: Are you going to travel anywhere on your vacation?
PERSON B: It all depends on airline prices. I _____. (might, maybe, could have)
1. Wendy has a job interview tomorrow afternoon. I told her she ____ to dress conservatively and be on time. (may have, will probably have, will have)
2. You ____ introduce yourself when you attend the conference in Paris next week, so you should learn how to do so in French before going. (must probably, could probably have to, will probably have to)
3. Yesterday, I saw Ted looking at diamond rings in a jewelry store. In my opinion, he ____ ask his girlfriend to marry him. (might have to, must be going to, is going to)
4. I've gained so much weight lately, my suit ____ fit. (will probably not, will have to, couldn't)
5. If you take the apartment, you ____ for paying the rent at the start of each month. (may have responsibility, will be responsible, will probably be responsible)
6. You have some time to make up your mind about taking the job. You ____ tell me your decision until Friday. (didn't have to, must, don't have to)

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Correct the following sentences.

1. Your daughter is really smart. She must be very successful someday.
2. It's cold outside. It should snow later on.
3. Joe could come to our party next weekend.
4. She wondered how much food she might take.
5. Might you both live happily ever after together.
6. The cinema is close. We can as well walk.
7. Must I speak to the Chief Councilor, please?
8. You will be see her on Friday at Jackie's house.
9. I could bringing some more bread home with me tonight.
10. I have to visit Auntie May yesterday.
11. You must came over again some time.
12. Janice can be coming too.
13. I could not make it tomorrow night.

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Talk about certainty, probability or possibility given the following topics in the future.



relationships



education



etiquette



economy



technology



healthcare

The End