

# Using Modal Verbs



# Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs which cannot usually work alone. They are used with a main verb. These are **modal verbs**:

might

will

may

should

could

would

ought

must

shall

can



# Inverting Modal Verbs

Modal verbs make questions by inversion.

She **can** go out.

**Can** she go out?



We **could** drive there.

**Could** we drive there?



Children **should** eat fruit.

**Should** children eat fruit?



# Possibility

Modal verbs can be used to show how possible something is, or how likely it is to happen/have happened.

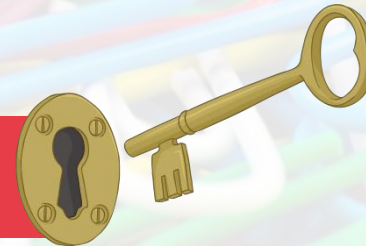
He's very late. He **could have missed** the train.



It's snowing so it must be very cold outside.



They will lock the windows when they go out.



# Possibility

Modal verbs can be used to show how possible something is, or how likely it is to happen/have happened.

Mum **might** take us swimming after school.



You **could** eat a banana instead of those sweets.



“Hurry up! We **will** be late!” said Dad.



We **can** go the other way – it’s quicker.



You **ought** to go to bed earlier.



# Choose a Modal Verb

Which modal verbs are missing from these sentences?

You **must** be hot in that thick coat.



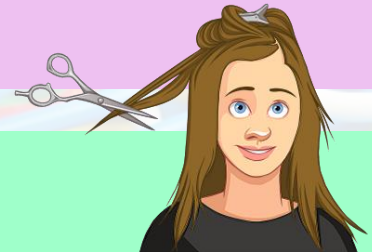
If it's dry, **shall** we play outside?



He's so fast, he **should** win the race.



I'm fed up with my long hair. I **might** have it cut.



Did you choose these modal verbs?  
Which others could you have used?

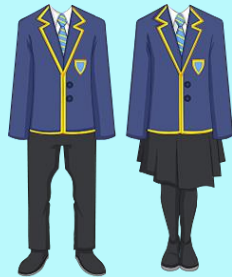
# Other Uses of Modal Verbs

Modal verbs can also be used to show:

## advice or obligation

Pupils **must** wear a uniform.

You **should** not smoke.



## habits

I **will** often have cereal for my breakfast.

We **shall** always enjoy a walk in the park.



## permission

**May** I leave a few minutes early?

**Could** we go to the post box on the way?

Please **can** we have an ice cream?



## ability

I **can** ride a bike.

My grandfather **could** draw very well.

