

AUXILIARY AND MODAL VERBS

Sequence within the verb phrase:

modal + (perfect) + (passive) + (progressive) + lexical verb

The first auxiliary verb will be called *operator*.

A) Criteria for auxiliary verbs:

- operator in negation with "not"
- negative contractions
- inversion of subject and operator
- emphatic positive
- operator in reduced clauses: types

B) Additional features of modal auxiliaries: (anomalous finites)

- construction with the bare infinitive
- finite functions only
- no 3rd. person inflection
- abnormal time reference

THE PRIMARY VERBS: BE, HAVE, DO

A) BE serves for making the passive voice and the progressive aspect (continuous tenses)

B) HAVE is both main and auxiliary verb.

When it means "possess" it needs the auxiliary verb "do"

It serves for making the perfective aspect (perfect tenses)

C) DO can be also an auxiliary and a full verb: when auxiliary it has only present and past forms in negative and interrogative sentences.

MODAL AUXILIARIES

CAN/COULD

- express possibility: *I can't come tomorrow*
- express ability: *I can swim very well*
I could swim when I was four
- make requests: *Can I have some more tea, please?*
Could you open it for me, please?
- draw conclusions: *It can't be my coat*
It could be mine, I suppose
- ask permission: *Can I leave now?*
- make suggestions: *You could go to the doctor.*

MAY/MIGHT;

- express possibility: *She may/might phone tonight*
- ask permission: *May/might I use your phone?*
- draw conclusions: *He may/might be tired*

MUST:

- express prohibition: *You mustn't feed the animals.*
- draw conclusions: *You must be tired*
- express obligation or compulsion: *I must go to the bank*
- persuade: *You must see this film*

SHOULD:

- give advice: *you should go to the dentist*
- ask for advice: *What do you think we should/ought to do?*
- express obligation: *I should study a bit more.*

WILL/WOULD

- prediction, volition, decision, offer

NEED (when auxiliary: interrogative and negative only)

- ask about necessity: *Need I see a doctor?*
- remove obligation: *you needn't come tomorrow*

OUGHT TO

- express obligation: *you ought to go to the dentist*
- ask for advice: *what do you think we ought to do?*
- give advice: *you oughtn't to work so hard*

USED TO is used to

- express past facts: *we used to live in that street*
- express past states: *he used to be quite rich*
- express past habits: *I used to smoke a lot but now I don't*

PERFECT MODAL VERBS

MUST

- make deductions: *She must have seen it before.*

COULD

- draw conclusions: *She could have missed the bus*
- make criticism: *You could have phoned earlier!*

MAY/MIGHT:

- draw conclusions: *she might have had an accident*
- make criticisms: *he might have asked you first!*

SHOULD:

- criticise past events or actions: *He should have been wearing a seatbelt*