

GRAMMAR Les modaux – constructions et valeurs

Les modaux sont des auxiliaires, on s'en sert pour former des énoncés interrogatifs, négatifs, interrogatifs, emphatiques et les 'question-tags'.

*Ex : When **will** the pandemic end? / We still **can't** got to a concert, **can** we? / The Prime Minister **must** know that public opinion is changing.*

Les modaux sont suivis de **la base verbale** (le verbe à l'infinitif sans to) ou de **HAVE + participe passé**

*Ex : You **may** go / The measure **should have been** implemented / They **couldn't** see where they were going / He **must have** arrived by now...*

On ne peut pas utiliser deux modaux ensemble. Si nécessaire, on fait appel à **une forme périphrastique**.

*Ex : *She will ~~can~~ - she will be able to*

Modal	Forme périphrastique
can (de capacité) / cannot	be able to / be unable to
may (de probabilité) / may not	be likely to / be unlikely to
may (de permission)	be allowed to
must (de quasi-certitude)	be bound to
must (d'obligation)	have to

Valeurs de can / cannot / can't have + pp

• **capacité physique ou intellectuelle, possibilité physique ou matérielle :**

ex. She can drive / We can come to see you at the weekend...

• **permission, demande de permission :**

ex. You can only take one suitcase on the flight / Is this chair free? Can I take it?

• **incapacité, impossibilité :**

ex. I can't make it to the meeting, I'm stuck in a traffic jam. I need some help, I cannot open the window.

• **interdiction :**

ex. Sorry, you can't smoke here.

• **forte probabilité :**

ex. You can't be serious! / He can't have finished your test already! / They can't have got lost, surely!

• **caractéristique du sujet**

ex. She can be impatient (il lui arrive d'être impatiente).

Valeurs de could / couldn't

could / couldn't exprime la capacité, la permission, l'incapacité, l'interdiction dans le passé et aussi...

- **capacité au conditionnel :**

ex. *The goverment could win the vote if members of the opposition also vote in favour.*

- **conditionnel de politesse, demande de permission :**

ex. *Could I borrow your pen please?*

- **la probabilité**

ex. *Don't leave call now, the show could start at any minute.*

Valeurs de could(n't) have +pp

- **éventualité passée non réalisée**

ex. *You were lucky, you could have hurt yourself. (= but you didn't)*

- **possibilité passée non réalisée**

ex. *Why didn't you tell me ? I could have helped you.*

- **reproche, regret**

ex. *He failed his driving test again, he could have tried harder.*

Valeurs de must / mustn't (Attention, au passé, must est remplacé par had to +V)

- **expression de l'obligation**

ex. *You must be 18 to drive in France. / Don't stay out too late, you must be home by 10pm.*

- **expression d'une quasi-certitude**

ex. *Nobody is answering the phone in the office, James must be off sick.*

- **différence entre mustn't et don't have to**

ex. *You mustn't bring your computer (= il ne faut pas apporter votre ordinateur)*

You don't have to bring your computer (= il n'est pas nécessaire d'apporter votre ordinateur)

Valeurs de should / shouldn't / should(n't) have +pp

- **should est utilisé pour donner un conseil ou pour faire une suggestion**

ex. *You really should visit New york, it's a fascinating city.*

- **il est aussi utilisé pour exprimer une probabilité**

ex. *England has a strong team, they should win the match.*

- **should have +pp est utilisé pour exprimer un reproche**

ex. *You shouldn't have gone there, now things are even worse!*

Valeurs de may / may not

- **la permission ou l'interdiction**

ex. *"May I leave now?" "No, you may not."*

- **une éventualité**

ex. *I'm not sure, he may come to the party, but then again, he may not.*

Valeurs de might (might est le passé de may)

- **might exprime une éventualité**

ex. *Take an umbrella, you never know, it might rain.*

Valeur de may have + Vppé / might have +Vppé

- **une éventualité peut-être réalisée ou non**

Ex. *They're late, their car may have broken down.*

Ex. *Any idea where they are? They might have gone home already.*

Valeurs de would (would est le passé de will)

- **Il sert à former le conditionnel**

Ex. *I would like to visit Glasgow one day. (J'aimerais...)*

I would go there if I had the chance. (J'irais..)

- **Il décrit le comportement caractéristique d'un sujet dans le passé, on parle aussi de would 'fréquentatif' ou 'itératif', dans ce cas, on peut l'utiliser pour traduire un imparfait.**

Ex. *When I was young, every summer I would visit my grandparents.*

Practice makes perfect

A. Give the appropriate modal

1. (Quasi-certitude) The whole city is flooded, there **must have been** a huge storm.
2. (Interdiction) You **must not drink** and drive.
3. (Reproche) The Prime Minister **shouldn't have lied** about the parties at Downing Street.
4. (Capacité) I've just graduated, I **can start** looking for a job now.
5. (Obligation) You **must be** properly equipped to go mountaineering.
6. (Eventualité) Carry on social distancing, another variant **may / might appear**.
7. (Conseil) You **should go** and see the latest Spike Lee film.

B. Translate the sentences, use the appropriate modal verbs

1. Il faut que tu lises ce roman, il est magnifique.

You must read this novel, it's magnificent.

2. Il savait certainement que le dopage était interdit.

He must have known that doping was illegal.

3. Il se peut que tu aies raison.

You may / might be right.

4. Ils auraient pu avoir un accident.

They could have had an accident.

5. Vous auriez dû réviser davantage.

You should have revised more.

6. Elle savait qu'elle pouvait compter sur ses amis proches.
She knew that she could count on her close friends.

7. Il ne savait pas nager.
He couldn't swim.

8. Il devrait avoir terminé son travail maintenant.
He should have finished his work by now.

9. Ils n'aurait pas dû être méprisants.
They should not have been so scornful.

10. Je sais mieux parler anglais maintenant.
I can speak better English now.

11. Le gouvernement devrait faire plus pour les sans-abri.
The government should do more for the homeless.

12. Tes parents ont essayé de te joindre, tu dois les rappeler ce soir.
Your parents have tried to reach you, you must call them back this evening.

13. Ils devraient être là maintenant, ils se sont peut-être perdus !
They should be here now, they might have got lost!

14. Quand on était en vacances, on allait à la plage tous les jours.
When we were on holiday, we would go to the beach every day.

15. Le taxi aurait pu nous attendre.
The taxi could have waited for us.