

1º Bachillerato. MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS

I. GENERAL

CAN, COULD, MAY, MIGHT, MUST, WILL, WOULD, SHALL, SHOULD, OUGHT TO, NEEDN'T

- No -s on the third person singular
- Questions and negatives without *do*.
- No infinitives (other verbs are used instead)
- Followed by infinitive without *to* of other verbs (except *ought to*).

She may come tomorrow.

Could you lend me a pound?

I'd like to be able to skate (not ~~to can skate~~).

I can't swim. (but You ought to go to the doctor).

II. ABILITY

- Present:

He can't speak English without making mistakes.

I can speak five languages fluently.

- Future:

I will be able to swim soon.

I won't be able to see you tomorrow.

- Past:

When I was a little boy I could sing like an angel. (general ability)

I was able to get tickets for yesterday's concert. (particular ability)

Sorry. I couldn't find the book that I borrowed from you. (couldn't for both in the negative)

III. POSSIBILITY

- Factual possibility:

We may/might go climbing in the Alps next summer.

I may/might get a job soon.

They aren't at home. They could be in the pub, I suppose.

- Theoretical possibility:

Scotland can be very warm in September.

How many elephants can fit into a mini?

IV. PERMISSION

Can I have a drop more whisky? (informal)

Could I ask you something, if you're not too busy? (standard)

May I leave the class a bit earlier today? (formal)

Might I see my exam, sir? (very formal)

V. OBLIGATION AND PROHIBITION

- Present:

a) *Must* involves the speaker's authority or opinion. It is personal:

You must go to bed now, young lady.

I must get my hair cut.

Must is often associated with a formal style:

Candidates must write in ink and answer four questions.

b) *Have to* expresses a general obligation based on a law or rule, or based on the authority of another person. It is more objective.

Most children have to go to bed before ten in the evening. (based on a law)

c) *Have got to* is also common in an informal style:

I've got to go now. See you.

d) *Mustn't* is used for prohibition; *needn't* / *don't have to* for absence of obligation

You mustn't cross the road when the light is red. (prohibition)

You needn't (or don't have to) hand in your essays now. (absence of obligation)

- Past:

I had to work very hard when I was a child. (obligation)

When he was at university he didn't have to pay for anything. He had a grant. (absence of obligation)

When he lived with his parents, he wasn't to be back home after 11 p.m. (prohibition)

- Future:

You will have to make your bed and polish your boots when you go to the army. (obligation)

You needn't (or won't have to) come tomorrow.

It's a public holiday. (absence of obligation)

You mustn't be late tomorrow. (prohibition)

VI. REQUESTS

- Could is the most useful one.

Can you come here a minute? (informal)

Could you please tell me the way to the railway station?

Could you possibly lend me ,500?

Will you please let me see your passport?

Would you please wait here?

VII. OFFERS

I can lend you a pound till Wednesday.

I could do the shopping for you, if you're tired.

Shall I carry your bag?

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

*Shall we eat now or shall we wait for Tom?
We could go to the Theatre next Friday.*

IX. INTENTION AND PROMISES

*I will stop smoking.
I will write to you every day.*

X. ADVICE OR SENSIBLE ACTION

*You should stop smoking. It's bad for your health.
He shouldn't drive so fast.
We ought to start work now.*

XI. DEDUCTIONS

*He looks pale. He must be ill. (affirmative deduction)
His name is Mariano. He can't be English. (negative deduction)*

XII. INVITATIONS

*Will you have a drink?
Would you like a drink?
Would you like to come to my party? Would you please wait here*

EXERCISES

2.- Use the verbs in brackets with a suitable auxiliary.

- 1.- I (not see) the screen. You (take) off your hat, please?
- 2.- Some dinosaurs (eat) a ton of meat a day.
- 3.- You (do) the washing-up. I've already done it.
- 4.- He's a very good student. I'm sure he (pass) without difficulty.
- 5.- Yesterday Peter (not get) to school in time for the exam.
- 6.- He (solve) very hard mathematics problems. He (be) very clever.
- 7.- I'm busy right now. You (phone) again later, please?
- 8.- But you've just had lunch. You (not be) hungry yet.
- 9.- If you don't tell me the truth, you (stay) at home for the weekend.
- 10.- Peter is very weak at English. He (study) harder.
- 11.- When my father was a child, he (go) to bed at nine every evening.
- 12.- Your car is a very old model. You (buy) a new one.
- 13.- Mother to son: You (not eat) with your elbows on the table.
- 14.- I (have) a word with you, sir?
- 15.- Peter (persuade) his father to let him come with us.
- 16.- When he was in the second year he (not write) three words without making a spelling mistake.
- 17.- If you go Africa a lion (attack) you.
- 18.- We (meet) him later this evening, but I don't think we will.
- 19.- We (go) dancing or to the theatre?
- 20.- You (not say) another word. I believe you.
- 21.- You (open) the window? It's very stuffy in here.
- 22.- You (come) to my party next Saturday?
- 23.- Teacher to students: You (not look) at your partner's exam.

- 24.- You (not have seen) a dinosaur. They have been extinct for millions of years.
- 25.- He ran out of petrol, so he (walk) seven miles to the petrol station.
- 26.- He (not read) the book. He had already read it.
- 27.- He uses very thick glasses. He (be) very short-sighted.
- 28.- You (not write) the extra essay if you pass the exam.
- 29.- There are only a few oranges left. We (buy) some more.
- 30.- If you go to London you (visit) the British Museum.
- 31.- If you go to the U.S.A. you (get) a visa.
- 32.- If you drive at over 100 k.p.h. you (get) fined.
- 33.- If you travel abroad you (take) traveller's cheques with you.
- 34.- If you climb up that mountain you (see) the sea.
- 35.- He (get) 20% off the price of that microwave oven.
- 36.- In Britain you (drive) on the left-hand side of the road.
- 37.- Muslims (pray) five times a day.
- 38.- Bob (not buy) a ticket, so he (pay) for it on the train.
- 39.- In Britain you (not have) alcoholic drinks if you're under 18.
- 40.- October (be) a very rainy month in this part of the country.
- 41.- Father to son: John, you (not talk) to your mother like that.
- 42.- We (not finish) this exercise until tomorrow.
- 43.- You (come) to Mary's party with me?
- 44.- When I was twenty I (do) seventy-five press-ups. (flexiones).
- 45.- I (not speak) German, but I (speak) a little English.
- 46.- When I was in the army I (get) up at six every morning.
- 47.- I (leave) the class for a minute?
- 48.- He's very short. He (not be) a basketball player.
- 49.- John hasn't come to school today. He (be) ill or he (be) playing truant. (hacer novillos)
- 50.- I promise I (visit) you soon.
- 51.- His girlfriend is still at university. She (be) very young.
- 52.- You (not spend) all your money on stupid things. You (save) some money for the future.
- 53.- We (go) to see "Avatar" or "Sherlock Holmes"?
- 54.- You look tired. I (help) you?
- 55.- If you don't pass the exam now you (take) it again in September.
- 56.- He (not ride) a motorbike, but he (drive) a car.
- 57.- I'm very busy today. I (not take) the car to the garage for repair until tomorrow.
- 58.- If you do the pools (quinielas) you (win) a lot of money.
- 59.- If we share the world's resources we (feed) everybody.
- 60.- Most people (work) to earn their living.
- 61.- If you're over 18 you (have) your parent's permission to get married.
- 62.- Sergeant to soldier: you (be) careful when you clean your rifle.
- 63.- When I was a boy I (not make) my bed. My mum made it for me.
- 64.- If you marry me I (be) the best husband in the world.
- 65.- You (not finish) this exercise today, but you (do) all the sentences for Tuesday.
- 66.- I (open) the window, please? I need some fresh air.
- 67.- When we flew to New York, we (enjoy) a wonderful sight of Manhattan from the sky.
- 68.- Peter (wash) more often. Sometimes he stinks.
- 69.- He had a motive and the chance to commit the crime. He (be) the murderer.