

**SESSION 7**

**MODAL AUXILIARIES**

**I. CONTENTS:**

1. Modals that indicate possibility: *may, might, must, could*.
2. Adverbs that indicate probability: *maybe, perhaps, probably*.
3. Introduction to the forms of expression of permission (*can, to be allowed to*); obligation (*have to, have got to*); and prohibition (*can't, not to be allowed to*).

**II. OBJECTIVES:**

At the end of the SESSION, students:

- Will recognize the functions of the modals auxiliaries, adverbs and the expressions of permission, obligation and prohibition in sentences that indicate possibility, probability.
- Will know the grammatical function of the adverbs.
- Will be able to make conversations using the contents seen in this session.
- Will identify these elements in sentences in real situations.

**III. DISCUSSION:**

*Discuss the questions with your teacher and choose the most important ideas.*

- In Spanish what adverbs indicates probability or doubt? To what elements correspond into English?
- What words do you use for telling a person that has permission of do or say something? And the obligation, in Spanish?

**IV. INFORMATIONAL AND FORMATIVE TEXT**

**1.1. Modals that indicate possibility: *may, might, must, could*.**

Modal verbs, modal auxiliaries or modals, are a type of auxiliary verbs. English has ten modals:	
can	could
may	might
shall	should
will	would
must	ought to

Modals express the mood a verb, such as ability, possibility, necessity, or another condition. They are used with a main verb to form a sentence or a question. Modals are not conjugated, have no tense, and cannot be used without a main verb. When used with modal verbs -except ought-, main verbs always remain in the infinitive without to. In a statement the word order is subject + modal + main verb.

subject	modal	main verb
They	can	come
Mike	should	walk

In questions, the word order changes to modal + subject + main verb. Yes-No questions:

Modal	Subject	Main Verb
Can	they	come?
Should	Mike	drive?

Wh- questions:

Wh-word	Modal	Subject	Main Verb
When	can	they	come?
How	could	he	know?

**Could:** *Could* indicates possibility or ability in the past: I could have told you that. It could have been a disaster. When I was young, I could run very fast. *Could* speculates about future possibilities. In the following examples *could* and **might** are synonyms. It could / might rain tonight. That could / might be dangerous. In yes-no questions, *could* speculates about present possibilities: Could she be the murderer? Could this be a mistake? It can also make a request. In these examples *could* and *can* are synonyms, but *could* is more formal. Could / Can you open your window? Could / Can you help me move this sofa? *Could* indicates an option: We could go see a movie. I could become a doctor.

**May and Might:** The modals *may* and *might* indicate an uncertain future action. These two modals are synonyms. I may / might go to the cinema, or I may / might stay in the room. This may / might be a good idea. It may / might snow tonight. *May* or *can* give instructions or permission. You may / can now board the bus. You may / can begin the exam in five minutes. In yes-no questions that make a request, you can use *may* or *can*. *May* is more polite. May / Can I see your driver's license? May / Can we have some more juice, please? You can use *might* instead of *may* or *can*, but this is extremely rare in American English. May / Can / Might I be of some assistance? May / Can / Might we offer you a suggestion?

**Must:** The modal *must* indicates an obligation. You must see this picture. Sergio must see a doctor immediately *Must* also indicates an assumption or probability. My leg must be broken. He must have done that before moving to Europe. In wh- questions, *must* is an obligation and can be replaced with the modal *should*. In American English, *should* is much more common in these types of questions. When should / must we go there? Who should / must I talk to? *Must/can* sometimes form rhetorical questions, when you want the person to stop doing something. Example: Must you make so much noise? = Please be quiet. Must he ask so many questions? = I hope he stops asking questions.

**A. May / Might:** express possibility or make a suggestion –present or future-. Use *may / might* interchangeably to express a possibility or to make a suggestion at the present time or in the future. *Might* suggests less certainty than *may*. Like all modals, *may* and *might* are followed by the simple or base form of the verb.

Grammatical structure: **subject + may / may not + verb + complement or subject + might / might not + verb + complement.** Examples:

She might go to study abroad next year.

She may go to study abroad next year.

If you return tomorrow, you may see Mr. Garcia.

It may snow tonight.

If you return tomorrow, you might see Mr. Garcia.

It might be cloudy on Sunday.

**B. Could:** express possibility or make a suggestion.

We can explain a possibility and make a suggestion in the present and the future tense using *could*:

The old table could be in the attic.

Present

Teresa and I could go to the theater next Sunday.

Future

Could you help me make this dress?

Present

When we are absolutely sure about something, we don't use modals. We use simple present, present, present progressive or future tenses. Remember that modals are used in progressive as well as simple forms. For example: The information in this book may be worst, but the information in this other one is not.

**C. May / Might / Could –and negative forms- : express uncertainty, but possibility.**

We use may, might, or could when you are less sure but think that the situation is at least possible. Examples: There may not be enough salad for everyone. I think we should buy a little more. It might snow tonight. I see there are many gray clouds this afternoon. Laura never gets lost. Could it have something to do with his boy scout training?

**D. May / Might / Could: to express some degree of certainty or probability in the future.** We can express some degree of certainty or possibility using may, might or could in the future. Examples: ANA: I think I saw Marcos pass by in his car. He might be going to university or he may be going to the park. ANTONIO: I could be wrong, but I think his university isn't in that direction.

**2.1. Adverbs that indicate probability: maybe, perhaps, probably.**

**Adverbials of probability are used to show the certainty about something.** These are most frequent adverbials of probability: *certainly - definitely - maybe - possibly clearly - obviously - perhaps – probably*. *Maybe* and *perhaps* are usually at the beginning of the clause: Perhaps Rosie is coming soon. *Maybe* she won't work tonight. Some more adverbs of possibility are usually placed before the main verb: Roy is certainly performing this weekend. Will Roy definitely show up? You will possibly have to work this Sunday, but after *am, is, are, was, were*: She is definitely gorgeous. We were obviously amused.

**Adverbs of probability mean if something is likely to happen: *Probably, certainly, definitely, maybe, perhaps, possibly*, they all mean that the person is unsure whether the thing will happen or will be done.** Will you read me a bed story? *Probably!* -it means maybe I will read it, or maybe not, other similar expressions are *maybe, perhaps, possibly*- Can you drive me to school? *Definitely!* - *Certainly* can also be used, and it means that I'm sure that I will drive you to school.

Study the next table with adverbs that indicates probability:

Adverbs	Example Sentences
Possibly	The tornado will possibly cause misfortunes.
Certainly	The tornado will certainly cause a misfortune.
Perhaps	Perhaps the tornado will cause misfortune.
Definitely	The tornado will definitely cause misfortune.
Probably	The tornado will probably cause misfortune.
Undoubtedly	The tornado will undoubtedly cause misfortune.

Grammar Note: use will with adverbs that show a high probability, such as undoubtedly, definitely and probably. For other adverbs, which show a smaller possibility, use may, could or might. Example: The tornado could, perhaps, cause misfortune or The tornado may possibly cause misfortune. Also, the position of the adverb is usually just in front of the verb for adverbs of possibility and probability. This is because the adverb gives more information about the verb. This is different from adverbs like Unfortunately, which give information about the whole sentence. Example: Unfortunately, the heavy tornado caused misfortune.

**3.1. Introduction to the forms of expression of permission (*can, to be allowed to*); obligation (*have to, have got to*); and prohibition (*can't, not to be allowed to*).**

Have to / Have got to: are used to show a high degree of certainty: Examples:

-Phone ringing- It's got to be my father calling. He said he would call me at 8 o'clock and it is two minutes after eight. -The movie Alien has to have some information about extraterrestrial life.

We often use to be able to or to be allowed to instead of can. We can only form the Past of can – could-. To put can into other tenses we need the phrases to be able to or to be allowed to.

Affirmative sentences:

Tense	Modal	Form
Simple Present	I can play football.	I am able to play football. I'm able to play football.
		I am allowed to play football. I'm allowed to play football.
Simple Past	I could play football.	I was able to play football.
		I was allowed to play football.
Future (will)	Do not use can with will.	I will be able to play football. I'll be able to play football.
		I will be allowed to play football. I'll be allowed to play football.

Other possible tenses: Present Perfect: I have been able to play football. Negations:

Tense	Modal	Form
Simple Present	I cannot play football. I can't play football.	I am not able to play football. I'm not able to play football.
		I am not allowed to play football. I'm not allowed to play football.
Simple Past	I could not play football. I couldn't play football.	I was not able to play football. I wasn't allowed to play football.
		I was not allowed to play football. I wasn't allowed to play football.
Future (will)	Do not use cannot in the will-future.	I will not be able to play football. I won't be able to play football.
		I will not be allowed to play football. I won't be allowed to play football.

Questions:

Tense	Modal	Form
Simple Present	Can he play football?	Is she able to play football?
		Is she allowed to play football?
Simple Past	Could he play football?	Was he able to play football?
		Was he allowed to play football?
Future (will)	Do not use can in the will-future	Will he be able to play football?
		Will he be allowed to play football.

Have got to: is used to express necessity and obligation. Examples: Drivers have got to get a license to drive a car in the US. – Necessity- I have got to be at university by 7:30 AM. – Obligation-Using Have got to in Present, Past, and Future: Most modal verbs behave quite irregularly in the past and the future. Study the charts below to learn how have got to behaves in different contexts.

Use	Positive Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	Negative Forms 1. = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future	You can also use:
Have got to - Necessity-	1. People have got to be on time if they want to get a seat in the crowded theater. 2. Shift to <u>have to</u> You had to be on time if you wanted to get a seat in the crowded theater. 3. You have got to be there on time tonight if you want to get a seat in the crowded theater.	1. Shift to <u>have to</u> People don't have to be there on time to get a seat. 2. Shift to <u>have to</u> You didn't have to be there on time to get a seat. 3. Shift to <u>have to</u> You won't have to be there on time to get a seat.	have to, must
Haven't got to -Future Obligation-		Haven't you got to be there by 7:00? Haven't you got to finish that project today? <u>Haven't got to</u> is primarily used to ask about future obligation. It can be used in statements, but this is less common.	Don't you have to

Sings or symbols to express:

Don't walk:



Don't smoke:



Don't touch:



Danger:



No dogs Not allowed:

