

# Module 2 – Modal Verbs (Present and Past)

Title: "Certainty, Advice, and Possibility – Mastering Modals"

## [Opening ]

Hi there, and welcome back!

In this lesson, we're going to explore **modal verbs** — those small but powerful words that help us express necessity, possibility, advice, deduction, and permission.

We'll focus on how to use modals in the present and the past, and we'll look at some typical situations and expressions.

Let's dive in!

## [Section 1 – Present Modals]

Let's start with modal verbs in the **present**. Here are some of the most common ones:

**Must** – strong obligation or logical deduction

**Have to** – external obligation

**Should / Ought to** – advice or recommendation

**Might / Could / May** – possibility

**Needn't / Don't have to** – lack of necessity

Let's look at examples:

*You must wear a seatbelt.* (It's the law → **obligation**)

*I have to get up early tomorrow.* (A personal schedule → **necessity**)

*You should drink more water.* (**Advice**)

*It might rain later.* (**Possibility**)

*You don't have to come if you're busy.* (No obligation)

⚠ Note: **Must** and **have to** are similar, but not always interchangeable.

**Must** often comes from the speaker; **have to** comes from outside rules.

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## [Section 2 – Deduction and Probability]

Modal verbs can also express deduction — what we think is true based on evidence or logic.

Examples:

*He must be tired.* (I'm almost sure)

*She can't be at home.* (I'm sure she isn't)

*They might be on the train.* (Possible, but not certain)

### ❖ Tip:

As you have seen from the examples, modals of deduction are often followed by the base form of **be** or another verb.

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## [Section 3 – Modals in the Past]

Now let's move to the past.

To talk about deduction, advice, or possibility in the past, we use:

**modal + have + past participle**

Here's how it works:

**Must have + past participle**

→ Strong assumption about the past

*He must have forgotten the meeting.* (I'm almost sure)

**Can't have + past participle**

→ Strong negative deduction

*She can't have taken your phone.* (It's impossible)

**Might have / Could have + past participle**

→ Possibility

*They might have missed the train.*

**Should have / Ought to have + past participle**

→ Criticism or regret

*You should have told me earlier.*

*I ought to have studied more.*

Let's compare a few:

Expression	Meaning
He must be tired.	Present deduction
He must have been tired.	Past deduction
You should call her.	Advice (present/future)
You should have called her.	Missed advice (past)

## [Section 4 – Mini-section – Needn't Have & Didn't Need To]

### ⚠ A common confusion:

*You didn't need to come.* → You didn't come, and it wasn't necessary.

*\*You \*needn't have come.* → You came, but it wasn't necessary.

### Different meanings — be careful!

Example:

*I cleaned the house, but they needn't have come so early.* =

**I cleaned the house** (past simple) – ( the speaker did the cleaning.)

**they needn't have come so early** – their early arrival was unnecessary, because everything (the cleaning) was already taken care of.

*I didn't know they had already done it. I needn't have worried.* =

**they had already done it** – the action was already completed by someone else.

**I needn't have worried** – the speaker did worry, but it turned out to be unnecessary.

## [Recap & Outro]

Let's wrap up!

Use must / might / can't for deduction in the present

Use modal + have + past participle for deduction or advice in the past

Use should have / could have / might have to reflect on what didn't happen

Watch out for needn't have vs didn't need to

Thanks for watching, and in the next lesson, we'll explore passive structures and impersonal forms — essential tools for academic and formal English.

See you then!