

MODAL AND SEMI-MODAL VERBS



MAIN
FEATURES

MODAL AND SEMI-MODAL VERBS

Verbs which function as auxiliaries

Can, could, may, might,
must, mustn't, needn't,
should, ought to, will,
would and shall

MODAL AND SEMI-MODAL VERBS

They have one form for all the grammatical persons. They don't take the "s" for the third person singular.

- She must be ill

They don't have all the verbal tenses and we have to use verbs such as "be able to, have to or know how to" to express the rest of the tenses.

- I must study today because yesterday I had to help my mother

MODAL AND SEMI-MODAL VERBS

They don't need any auxiliary verb for the interrogative and negative forms

- May I come in?

They are always followed by another verb in infinitive without to

- He should listen to the teacher

MODAL AND SEMI-MODAL VERBS

They don't have a form for the infinitive, they are never named with "to" before them

If they need an infinitive, we have to use some other verbs such as "to be able to".

- *I want to be able to study*

CAN COULD BE ABLE TO

CAN

- Ability to do something
- Possibility or impossibility to do something
- Informal request
- Suggestions
- Informal permission
- Negative deduction

COULD

- Ability in the past
- Past possibility or impossibility.
- Formal request
- Suggestions
- Formal permission
- Past negative deduction

BE ABLE TO

- Ability in the future, present perfect and so on.
- Possibility or impossibility to do something in the future, present perfect and so on .