



Modals of Present and Future Possibility

► Present Modals

AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS			
SUBJECT	MODAL	MAIN VERB OR BE (+ VERB + -ING)	
He	may	have	a car.
	might		
She	could	be meeting	him now.
They	should	be	home.
	must		

NEGATIVE STATEMENTS			
SUBJECT	MODAL + NOT	MAIN VERB OR BE (+ VERB + -ING)	
He	may not	have	a car.
	might not		
She	couldn't	be meeting	him now.
	can't		
They	shouldn't	be	home.
	must not		

► Future Modals

AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS			
SUBJECT	MODAL	MAIN VERB OR BE (+ VERB + -ING)	
He	may	get	a car soon.
	might		
She	could	be meeting	him later.
They	should	be	home soon.
	will		

NEGATIVE STATEMENTS			
SUBJECT	MODAL + NOT	MAIN VERB OR BE (+ VERB + -ING)	
He	may not	get	a car soon.
	might not		
She	couldn't	be meeting	him later.
	can't		
They	shouldn't	be	home yet.
	won't		

Modals of Present Possibility

- Modals have only one form with all subjects.
- *Must not*, *may not*, and *might not* have no contracted forms as modals of possibility.



Do not confuse the two words *may be* (modal + *be*) with *maybe*, a one-word adverb that often begins a sentence.

He **may be** late. **Maybe** he's late.

- *Could* and *can* are used to ask questions about present possibility. *Might* is very uncommon. Use *be* in short answers to questions containing *be*.

A: **Could** he **be** sleeping? A: **Can** it **be** true?

B: He **might** be. B: It **must not** be.

- See 7.4 for contractions with *should*, *could*, and *can*.

Modals of Future Possibility

- *Must* (not), *can't*, and *couldn't* are not usually used to express future possibility unless they are combined with the continuous.

She **must not be getting** a new car next month.

- *Could* may be used to ask questions about future possibility. Notice the short answers.

A: **Could** he **arrive** before we get home? B: Yes, he **might**. / No, he **won't**.

- See 7.5 for contractions with *will*.

► Present Phrasal Modals

AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS			
SUBJECT	MODAL	MAIN VERB OR BE (+ VERB + -ING)	
He	ought to	be	home.
She	has to has got to	be riding	her bike.
They	have to have got to	have	a car.

CONTRACTIONS			
She's They've	got to	have	a car.

► Future Phrasal Modals

AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS			
SUBJECT	MODAL	MAIN VERB OR <i>BE</i> (+ VERB + <i>-ING</i>)	
He	ought to	be	home soon.
She	has to has got to	be coming	
They	have to have got to		

CONTRACTIONS			
She's They've	got to	to be coming	home soon.

Phrasal Modals of Present Possibility

- The phrasal modal *ought to* has one form with all subjects. The phrasal modals *have to* and *have got to* have different third-person singular forms.
- None of these phrasal modals is used in the negative to express possibility.
- *Have got to* has contracted forms (see 7.4). *Ought to* and *have to* do not.

Phrasal Modals of Future Possibility

- *Have to* and *have got to* are only used to express future possibility with the continuous. They've **got to be arriving** soon.