

Modals



AN INTRODUCTION

What are the modals?



- Can
- Could
- Would
- Should
- Will
- Must
- Might
- Shall (British)
- May (used by old people)

How can you decide which modal to use?



- Two Factors:
- Intensity
 - High.....Low
 - Must.....Would
- Base Meaning
 - Can = capable
 - Might =possible

Must



- You must be careful when you cross the road.
(obligation)

Can



- He *can* read. (ability)
- You *can* go. (permission)
- Tomatoes *can* give you indigestion. (possibility)

Will



- *I'll* call you tonight. (intention) *I'll* do it. (willingness)

should



- You *should* ask for help. (obligation)

might



- He said you *might* know about it. (possibility)

could



- We *could* leave it here. (possibility/permission)

would



- *Would* you help them? (willingness)

Simplification with Could



- Could similar to might and may
 - I might go to the store
 - I may go to the store
 - I could go to the store
- All 3 have very similar meaning

Simplification with Would



- Would, could, should, might are all used to express hypothetical statements or conditions,
- e.g. It would/might/could/should be better to go this way.
- Would is the most frequent and can be chosen for learners to use.

Intensity



must

will

would

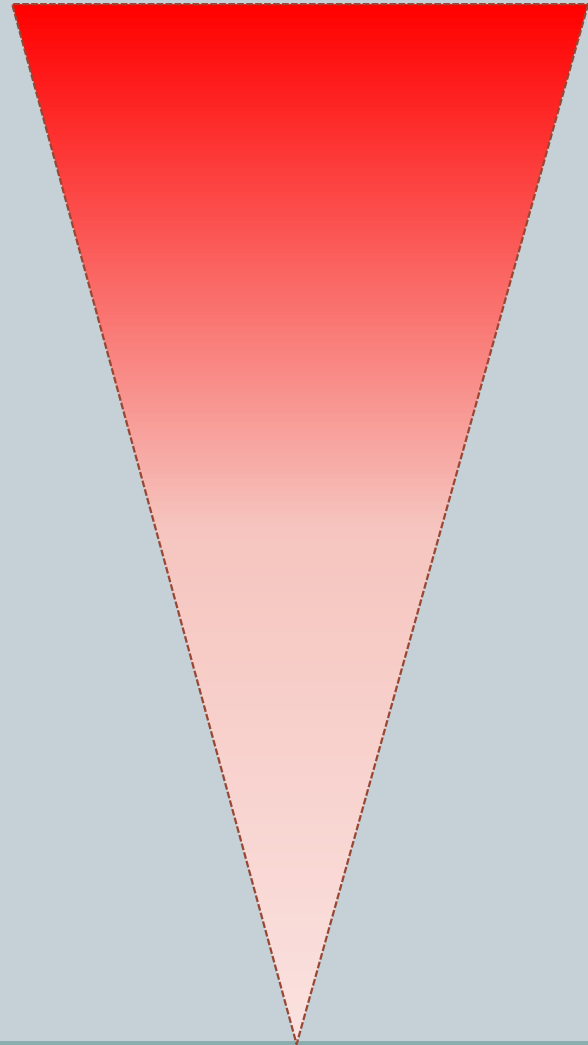
should

ought to

might

may

could



Exercises:



- <http://www.englishpage.com/modals/modalintro.html>