

**What are modals?**

Modals qualify verbs. Here's a list of commonly spoken modals:

can / could	I can try to call her after I get home. He couldn't imagine why she came.
<b>may / might</b>	You may leave. We may need to buy some more flour. I might buy some fruit on my way home.
<b>should</b>	We should visit her before her operation.
<b>ought to</b>	You really ought to tell the police what you saw.
<b>had better</b>	You had better apologize to her, today!
will / would	I will make a salad for the party. Would you pick up a few things for me at the store?
<b>have to</b>	Do I have to?
used to	We used to go swimming at Cass Lake in the summer.

We're going to practice using the modals shown above in **boldface**.

**What Is the Grammar of Modal Usage?**

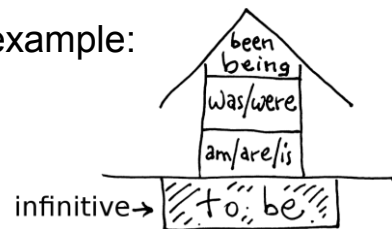
Modals follow this pattern:

...<modal> <base form of the verb>...

Where: "<base form of the verb>" is...

...the infinitive, *without* the particle, "to". For example:

- To **go** ("I might **go**.")
- To **get** ("I should **get** a better job.")
- To **pay** ("You'd better **pay** him back!")
- To **be** ("We should **be** happy that he's coming.")

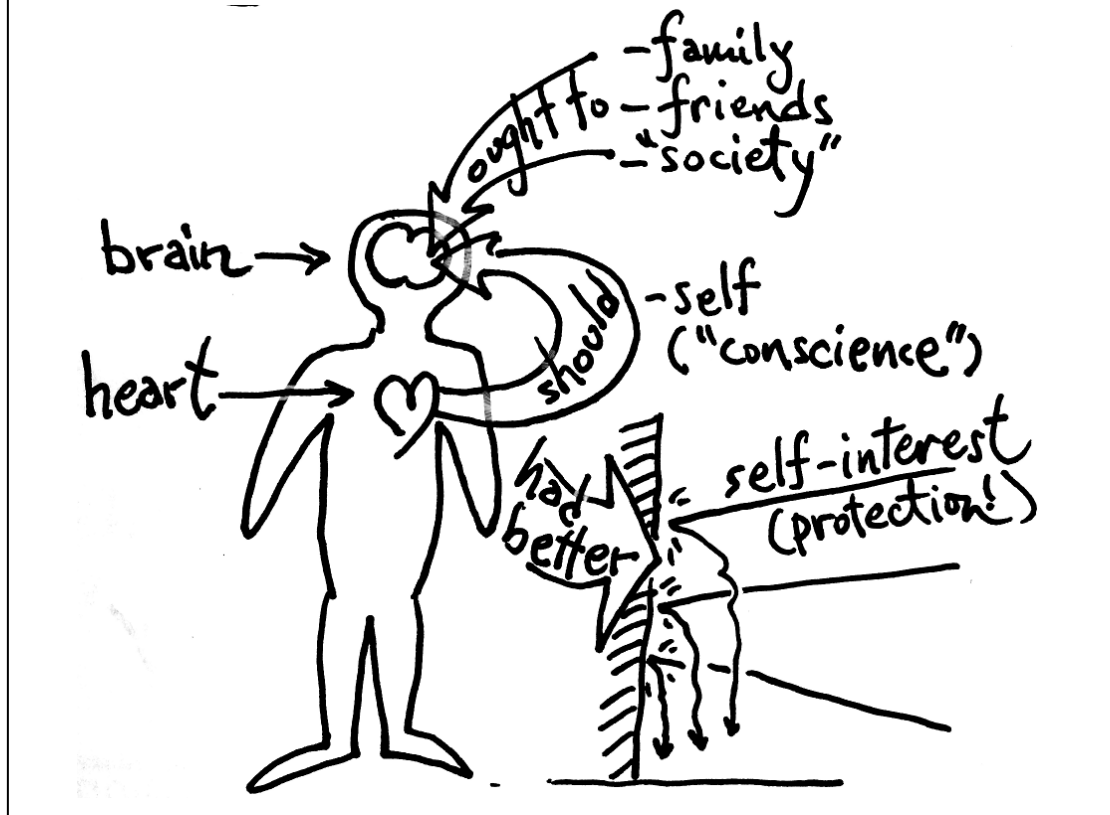
**Here's a Very Important Fact about Modals:**

- All morphemes vanish (disappear) when qualified with a modal:
  - He goes to Taipei every weekend. → He **should go** to Taipei...
  - I had gone to Taipei. → I **should have gone** to Taipei!

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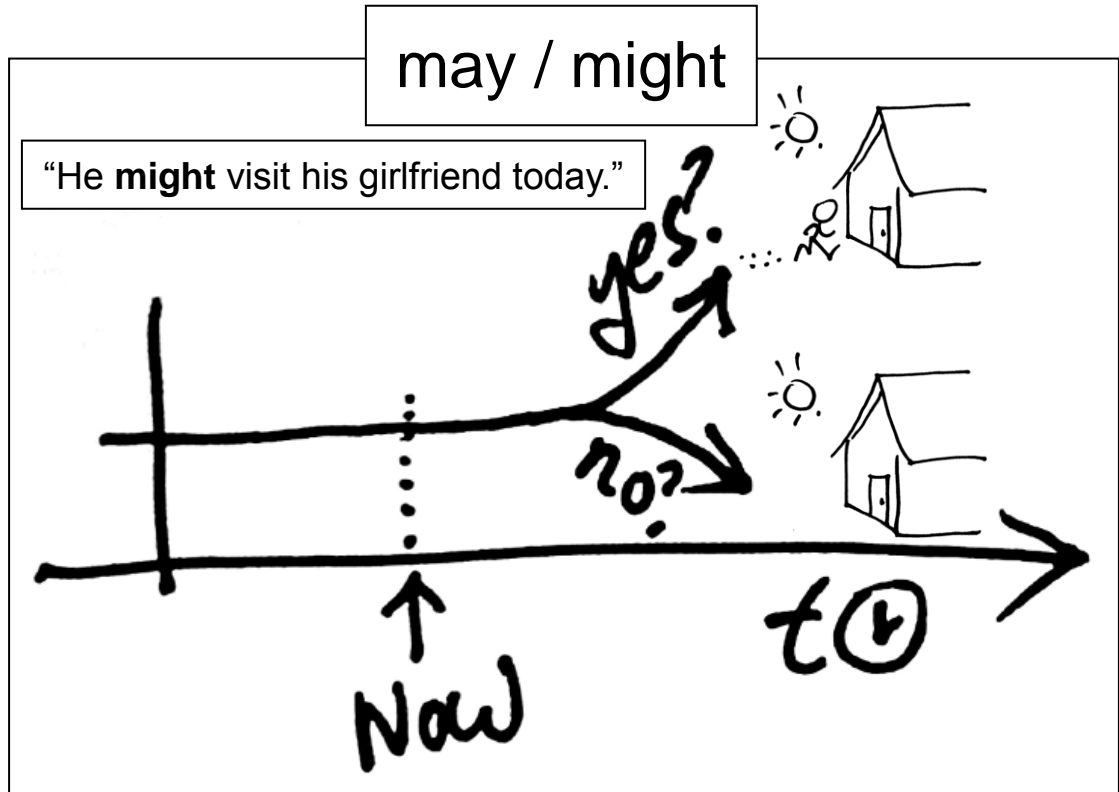
## ought to / should / had better



### Examples:

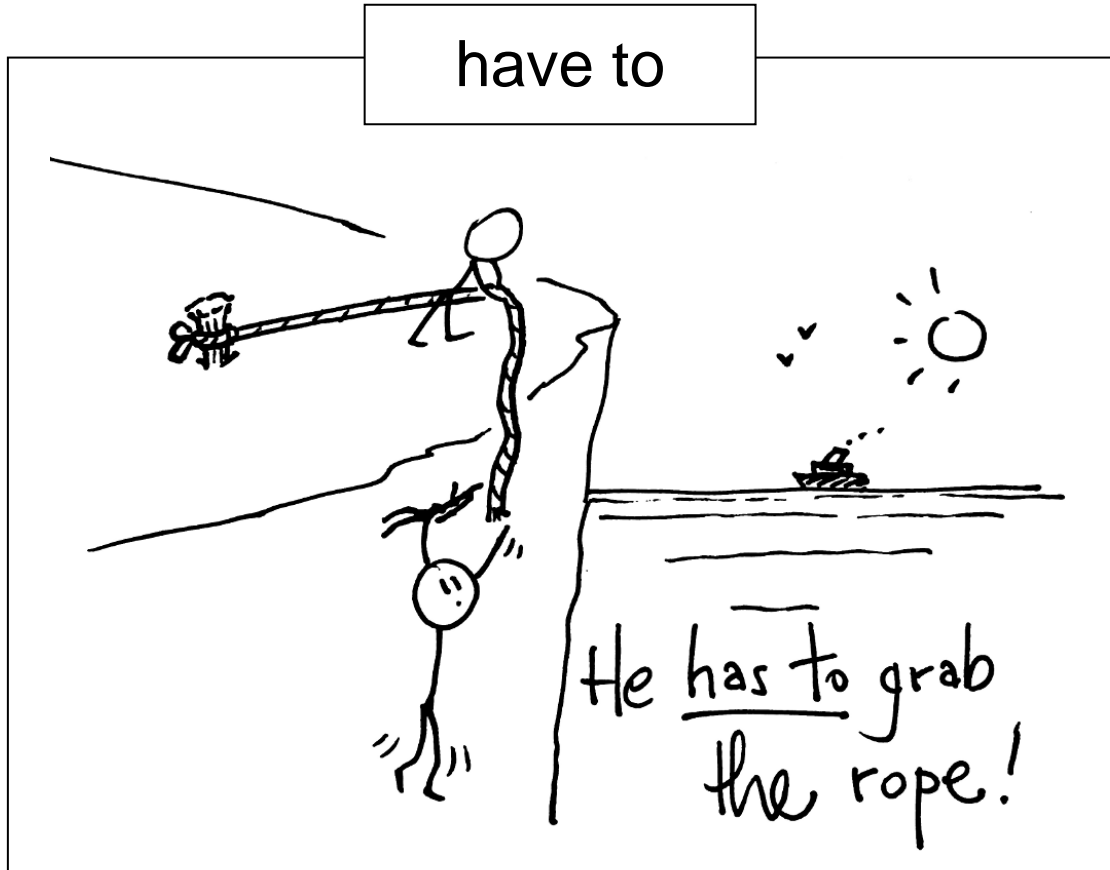
- Ought to
  - “The Philippines **ought to** apologize to Taiwan.”
  - “That restaurant **ought to** have special parking for the disabled.”
  - “He **ought to** visit his family for the Moon Festival.”
- Should
  - “I **should** have known not to speak with him about this.”
  - “When **should** we send the invitations?”
  - “Why **should** they care about our problems?”
- Had better
  - “You’d **better** see a doctor about that!”
  - “I’d **better** go right now and talk to her.”
  - “This movie **had better** be good! If it’s boring, I’m going to kill you!”





## Examples:

- May
  - Permission
    - “**May** I come in?”
    - “You **may** email me your school paper, if you wish.”
  - Possibility
    - “I **may** stay home today.” [*present*]
    - “He **may** come to the party; he’ll call, first.” [*future*]
    - “He **may** have come to the party; I didn’t see him, personally.” [*past*]
- Might (Possibility, ONLY)
  - “I **might** stay home today.” [*present*]
  - “He **might** come to the party; he’ll call, first.” [*future*]
  - “He **might** have come to the party; I didn’t see him, personally.” [*past*]



- Have to
  - “I **have to** go see my father today.” [present]
  - “He **had to** get some special tests at the hospital.” [past]
  - “If you want to get into a good university, you’// **have to** study harder and get better grades, now.” [future—see ‘will’?]

### One More Note Regarding “had better”

I	We	had →	I’d	We’d
You	You		You’d	You’d
He	They		He’d	They’d
She			She’d	
It			It’d / This’d / That’d	



## Activity ONE

Circle the best modal for the following sentences:

1. I really ( may / should / ought to ) lose some weight.
2. We ( might / ought to / have to ) go to the library before it closes and work on our reports.
3. My brother ( might / ought to / had better ) come to the party tonight; he hasn't decided, yet.
4. They ( may / had better / have to ) come on Tuesday. If not, then Wednesday, for sure.
5. My toothache is serious. I ( should / ought to / have to ) see a dentist today!
6. Do we ( might / should / have to ) leave today? If we leave tomorrow morning, we won't miss the concert.
7. If you don't want to miss the Fall semester, you ( ought to / had better / have to ) go get enrolled before Friday.
8. I really ( may / should / have to ) wash those dishes before I leave the house.
9. People ( might / should / ought to ) read a good book from time to time.

## Activity TWO

Team up with a classmate (or two), and create dialogs, using one or more of the modals that we have just studied. Feel free to use the **back of this page** to write down some ideas, or to write the dialog text.

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## Activity TWO (dialog scratch paper)

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