

Modal Verbs

What is a modal verb?

A modal verb is a verb that expresses necessity or possibility.

e.g. I can walk to the shops

Modal verbs work with another verb to describe how likely things are to happen or to what degree of certainty something is known.

Modal Verbs:

- The modal verbs are:
 - Can
 - Could
 - May
 - Might
 - Will
 - Would
 - Must
 - Should
 - Ought to

Have a look at the list below and see if you can think of a sentence that uses each possibility.

I can... e.g. I can do a handstand

I could...

I may...

I might...

I will...

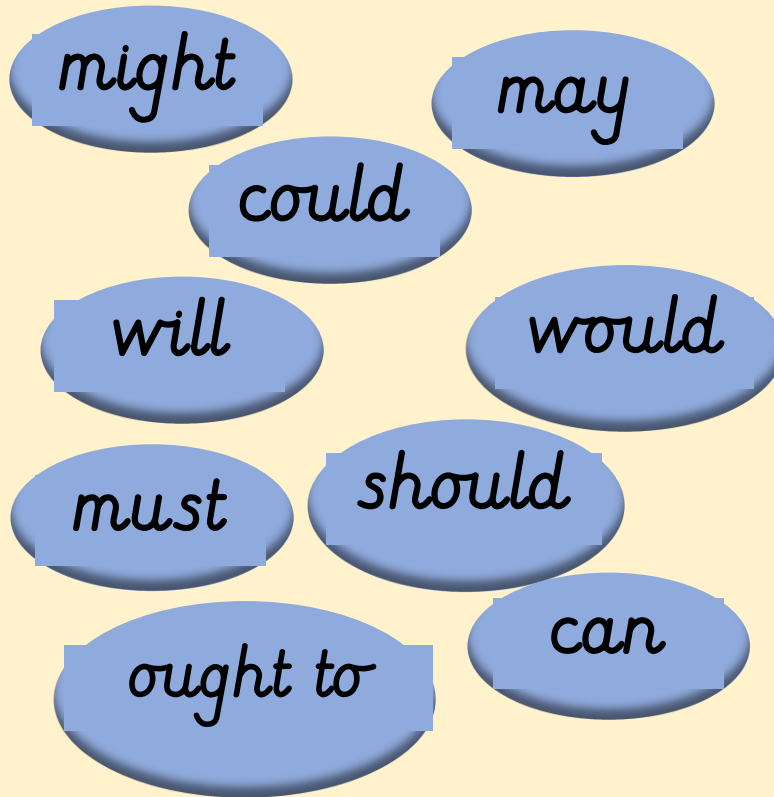
I would...

I must...

I should...

I ought to...

Can you see any way to organise these modal verbs into smaller groups that have something in common?



This is one possible way to organise these modal verbs.

These words indicate that something might or might not happen.

could

may

might

These words indicate that something needs to happen but still might not.

would

should

ought to

These words indicate a degree of certainty that something will happen.

will

can

must

Modal Verbs

You can also make modal verbs negative.

You must try the spaghetti.

You must not (mustn't) try the spaghetti.

Can you think of the negative forms of these modal verbs?

I can do a handstand

I

We could have an ice cream.

We

It may be sunny tomorrow.

It

This might take a long time.

This

Modal Verbs

You can also make modal verbs negative.

You must try the spaghetti.

You must not (mustn't) try the spaghetti.

Can you think of the negative forms of these modal verbs?

I can do a handstand

I can not (can't) do a handstand

We could have an ice cream.

We could not (couldn't) have an ice cream.

It may be sunny tomorrow.

It may not be sunny tomorrow.

This might take a long time.

This might not (mightn't) take a long time.

Modal Verbs

I will take more care next time.

I

I would like to leave this place.

I

You must take a closer look.

You

I should really have a holiday.

I

I've heard a lot about it, I ought to go there.

I've

Modal Verbs

I will take more care next time.

I will not (won't) take more care next time

I would like to leave this place.

I would not (wouldn't) like to leave this place.

You must take a closer look.

You must not (mustn't) take a closer look.

I should really have a holiday.

I should not (shouldn't) really have a holiday.

I've heard a lot about it, I ought to go there.

I've heard a lot about it, I ought not (oughtn't) to go there.