

Intermediate Modal Verbs

 1. Carl and Saskia are planning a camping trip with friends. Read their text messages.

Carl: Hi Saskia, do you know if we need to bring sleeping bags with us?

Saskia: Mmm I'm not sure, but I think you'd better pack one just in case. There are only 3 beds in the camper van so someone's got to sleep in the tent.

Carl: Ok I'll bring my sleeping bag, I think I'll bring an extra blanket too, it might get pretty cold.

Saskia: That's a good idea. And did you let your work know that you're not able to work on Friday and Monday?

Carl: Yeah I told my boss yesterday, but he wasn't exactly delighted.

Saskia: Why not?

Carl: Well I'm supposed to give him 2 weeks notice anytime I go on holiday, but I only gave him one week.

Saskia: Ah, well that's not good. Are you in a lot of trouble?

Carl: Not really. I managed to convince him that I actually told him about the holiday 3 weeks ago, and he forgot.

Saskia: But... that's not true?

Carl: Not at all! I completely forgot to tell him!

Saskia: Oh my god. You're so forgetful. 😞

Carl: Not as forgetful as my boss! 😂



Modal Verbs

A modal verb is a verb that is used with a main verb to express something about the main verb.

Eg. "*I can run faster than most people.*" *Can* is the modal verb and *run* is the main verb.

Some basic modal verbs are "have to", "should" and "will." However, there are some more advanced modal verbs (such as the underlined phrases in the story above) which are used very often.



2. Several advanced modal verbs are used and underlined in the story in exercise 1. Match the modal verbs to their definitions (look at the story for clues).

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|-----------------------------|--|
| a) manage to 4 | 1. Maybe (often used for uncertain future events.) |
| b) have/has got to 6 | 2. You should, and if you don't something bad will happen. |
| c) might 1 | 3. Can |
| d) able to 3 | 4. To do something that is not easy |
| e) had better 2 | 5. Should (often used to mean "should but don't") |
| f) supposed to 5 | 6. Must |

Might

"Might" is used to express that something could happen, but is not certain. It is often used to mean "maybe" and "will" together.

For example, you can say "Maybe I will retire in the next 10 years.", but it is easier to say "I might retire in the next 10 years."



3. Rewrite the sentences below to have the same meaning using "might." More than one correct answer is possible.

a) Maybe we will go to the beach tomorrow.

We might go to the beach tomorrow

b) There's a chance they will give you a discount if you ask.

They might give you a discount if you ask.

c) If I'm offered the job, maybe I will take it.

If I'm offered the job, I might take it.

d) If you don't leave now, you could miss your flight.

If you don't leave now, you might miss your flight

e) The doctor is very busy, so you will probably have to wait a while.

The doctor is very busy, so you might have to wait a while.

 **4. Ask and answer the following questions about the future with a partner. Try to use "might" in your answer.**

- Where do you think you will go for your next holiday, and what will you do?
- What will you do next weekend?
- Who do you think will be the leader of your country in 5 years?
- What do you think you will be doing in 5 years?
- What will you do for your next birthday? Will you have a party?



Have Got To

"Have got to" is the same as "have to." Note that the "have" is very often contracted to "'ve", or if it is a *he, she, or it*, the "has" is contracted to "'s"

E.g. "I've got to go now, my people need me!" or "She's got to move her car, she is parked illegally."



5. Rewrite the sentences below to have the same meaning using "have got to" or "has got to." Try to use contractions. More than one correct answer is possible.

a) I have to wake up early tomorrow, I have a flight at 5am.

I've got to wake up early tomorrow, I have a flight at 5am.

b) She must hand in her essay before midnight.

She's got to hand in her essay before midnight.

c) Italy must increase taxes if they want to have a bigger army.

Italy's got to increase taxes if they want to have a bigger army.

d) I am afraid I must leave now, my girlfriend is waiting.

I am afraid I've got to leave now, my girlfriend is waiting.

e) We have to sell more units or we'll be bankrupt by next year.

We've got to sell more units or we'll be bankrupt by next year.

6. Think about some things you or someone you know has to do, and express them using "have/has got to."

Able to

"Able to" is basically the same as "can" but it always has the verb "be" in front of it.

Eg. "I am able to download the file, but I can't see it."

"Will she be able to do the run tomorrow?"

"We were able to turn off the water before the basement flooded."

"Are you able to contact the company and ask for a refund?"

7. Read the article below and choose the correct form of the verb "be" before "able to."

When Emily was young, she were / *was* / is able to communicate with and understand animals better than anyone else in her town. She had an incredible talent, but the people of the town *were* / was / have been unable to understand it, and thought Emily must be a witch. This made Emily upset, but her grandfather explained "some people just isn't / don't / *aren't* able to understand someone who is a little different."



These days Emily was / *is* / will be still able to connect with animals very easily, and is actually studying to be a vet. Once she graduates from university, she is / was / *will be* able to put her skills to good use at a vet clinic.

8. Rewrite the sentences below to have the same meaning using "able to." Remember to add the verb "be" in the correct tense. More than one correct answer is possible.

a) I can learn languages quite quickly.

I am able to learn languages very quickly

b) She couldn't fit her bike into the car.

She wasn't able to fit her bike into her car.

c) Can you use Microsoft Excel?

Are you able to use Microsoft Excel?

d) I think in the future we will have the ability to live forever.

I think in the future we will be able to live forever.

e) The soldiers could quit whenever they wanted.

The soldiers were able to quit whenever they wanted.

Manage to

“Manage to” is also very similar to “can” but it emphasizes that something is or was difficult.

Eg. “We fixed the computer.” vs “We managed to fix the computer.”

The second example emphasizes that it was not easy to fix the computer.



9. Rewrite the sentences using “manage to” or “managed to.”

a) It wasn't easy, but we got the car to start.

Eg. *“It wasn't easy, but we managed to get the car to start.”*

b) If we keep up the hard work, I think we will meet our sales goals.

If we keep up the hard work, I think we will manage to meet our sales goals.

c) I didn't have GPS, but I found the doctor's office.

I didn't have GPS, but I managed to find the doctor's office.

d) How did you beat him in arm wrestling? He's twice your size!

How did you manage to beat him in arm wrestling? He's twice your size!

e) It took all day, but we finally moved all the furniture to the new house.

It took all day, but we finally managed to move all the furniture to the new house.

f) I convinced the hotel staff to give us a better room.

I managed to convince the hotel staff to give us a better room.



10. Think about a time where you had to do something difficult or stressful. Write the story of that time and try to use “managed to” several times.

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Had better

“Had better” is similar to “should” but it emphasizes that something bad will happen if you don't do this.

Eg. “You should put on some sunscreen.” (it is a good idea to do this) vs “You'd better put on some sunscreen.” (If you don't, you will get sunburnt.)

Note that *had better* is usually contracted to *'d better*.

 11. Read the situations and give advice using “You'd better...” More than one answer is possible.

a) “I cut my foot and I think it's infected. It's very swollen and it hurts a lot.”

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b) “I've had a few beers, maybe 5, but I think I'm ok to drive.”

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c) “I caught my colleague stealing money from work, I don't know what to do.”

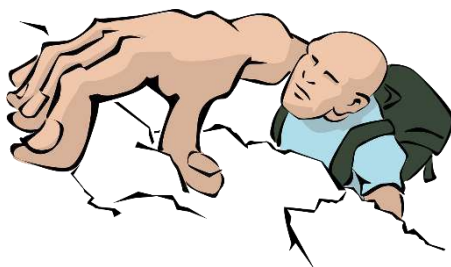
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d) “My girlfriend wants to get married, but we only met two weeks ago.”

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e) “I want to climb mount Everest in one year, but I'm really out of shape.”

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 12. Pairwork: create a situation in which you need advice and tell your partner the situation. Your partner will give you advice using “you'd better...”

E.g. “There's a car that is way out of my price range, but I really want it.”

“I think you'd better wait until you can afford it.”

Supposed to

“Supposed to” has several meanings, but one of most common is “should, but don’t”

Eg. “We are supposed to start work at 8am, but we usually get here a little late.” means we should do this, but don’t.

Note that supposed to is always used with the verb be.

Eg. “We were supposed to deliver the package yesterday, but there was a delay.”



13. Respond to the following situations with a sentence that contains “supposed to.” More than one answer is possible.

a) You see a man smoking at a petrol station.

Eg. *“He is not supposed to smoke here.”*

b) You organized to meet your friend at 5pm. It’s 6pm and she is still not here.

She’s supposed to be here by now.

c) Your housemate said he would clean the kitchen, but did not.

He was supposed to clean the kitchen.

d) You were asked to tell your friend about a party but you forgot.

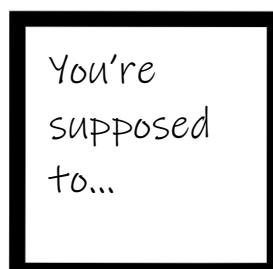
I was supposed to tell him/her/them about the party.

e) The employees at your work have been told to sign out at the end of the day, but most of them don’t.

They are supposed to sign out at the end of the day

f) Your doctor told you to eat more fruit and vegetables, but you don’t.

I’m supposed to eat more fruit and vegetables.





14. It's the day before the camping trip, and Carl and Saskia are exchanging messages. Complete the messages with the modal verbs you have learned.

able to

supposed to

might

had better

manage to

have got to

Saskia: Hi Carl, are you ready for the trip tomorrow? I just talked to Lisa and she said we **have got to** wake up early tomorrow because she wants to leave by 6am.

Carl: 6am?? Ok I guess I will be **able to** wake up that early if I have an early night tonight. And yes I'm ready and packed, I bought a new pair of hiking boots today for the hike.

Saskia: Wait you bought a new pair today? You know you're **supposed to** wear them every day for 2 weeks before you go for a long hike right?

Carl: Really? No I didn't know that, but I'm sure I'll **manage to** finish the hike, even with sore feet.

Saskia: The hike is 40 kilometers Carl... I don't know for sure, but this **might** be a problem. I think you **had better** pack extra thick socks and wear them, just in case.

Carl: Ok, thanks for the advice.

