

Grammar: Modals for Advice

Intermediate English, Week Five, Winter 2021

Giving advice

- When someone has a problem, you can give them *advice*
- *Advice* means you say what is a good thing or bad thing to do in a certain situation
- In this lesson, we will talk about some English words to give advice – *can/could*, *should*, and *must*
- These words are called *modals*. A modal is a “helping verb” – a verb that we must use together with another verb

Using *can* and *could*

- We use *can* and *could* to give a suggestion or advice – something is not necessary, but it's a good idea
 - You *can* watch movies in English to learn vocabulary.
 - We *could* eat Chinese food for lunch today.
- We don't usually use these words in the negative to give advice
- Remember, *can* has a few meanings in English
 - Ability – My sister *can* speak Portuguese and French.
 - Permission – It's hot in here. *Can* I open the window?
 - Advice – If you need help, you *can* call me.

Advice, permission, or ability?

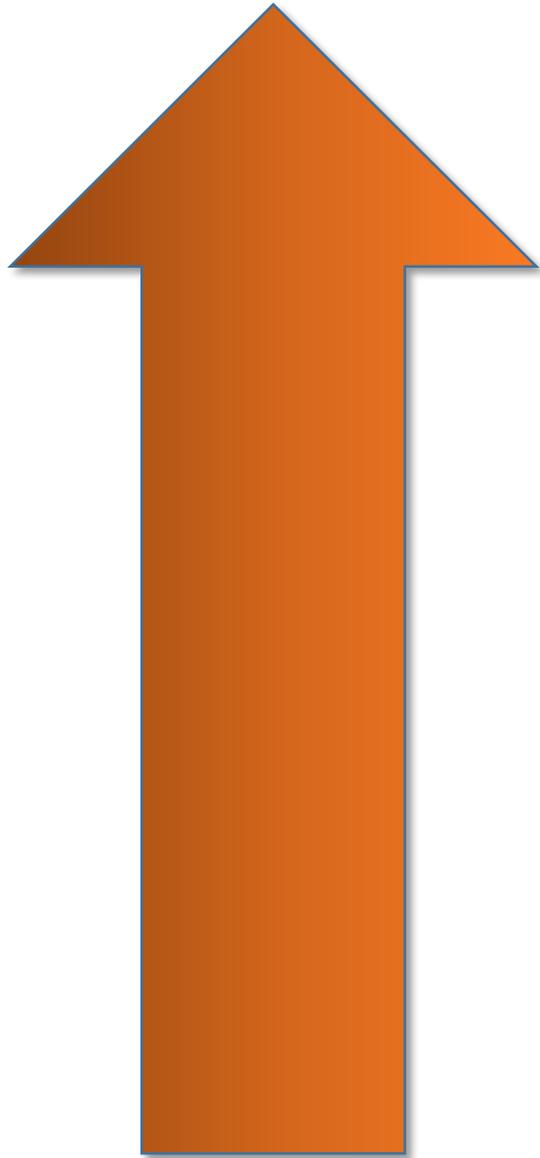
1. I took an art class last month. Now, I can paint nice pictures. **Ability**
2. My mom says I can go to your house after school today. **Permission**
3. You can order a pizza if you don't have time to cook. **Advice**
4. My brother got a pilot's license, so he can fly an airplane. **Ability**
5. Florida is cheaper than Hawaii. You can go there for a beach vacation.
Advice

Using *should*

- *Should* is stronger than *could*. We use it to give advice about something that is definitely a good idea
 - If you are tired, you *should* go to bed early.
 - To save money, we *should* stop going to restaurants.
- We also use *should not* for the negative, to say something that is a bad idea
 - You *should not* go to class if you feel sick.
- The contraction of *should not* is *shouldn't*
 - She *shouldn't* drive so fast on the highway.

Using *must*

- *Must* is stronger than *should* or *could*. It means that something is necessary – you *must* do it!
 - You *must* call 911 if there is an emergency.
 - We *must* wear our seatbelts when we drive.
- The negative of *must* is *must not*
 - You *must not* drive a car after drinking alcohol.
 - She broke her leg last week, so she *must not* play any sports.
- The contraction for *must not* is *mustn't*, but it is not common



Must – it is necessary!

Should – a good idea

Can / could – a suggestion

Using modals in a sentence

- *Must*, *should*, *can* and *could* are all auxiliary verbs (helping verbs). We need to use them with another verb
 - They should **look** online for a new job.
 - We could **go** to the park after class today.
- Don't change the verb (no -s, -ing, -ed, and so on)
 - Your son must **take** this medicine. **NOT** Your son ~~must takes~~ this medicine.
 - Also, don't change the modal!

Let's practice! Give these people advice.

“I really need a vacation. I want to go to the beach. But, I'm worried about COVID-19. I don't want to get sick.”



Let's practice! Give these people advice.

“I live in an apartment. It smells like smoke in the hallway near my neighbor's door. I don't know if it's a serious problem.”



Let's practice! Give these people advice.

“My kids go to school online.
They have trouble paying
attention, and sometimes
they don't understand their
homework. How can I help
them?”

