

Modals

Classes of Verbs

Verbs in English are categorised into two main classes:

1. Ordinary/Regular Verbs
2. Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary Verbs are further divided into:

- Primary Auxiliary Verbs: Be, do, have
- Modal Auxiliary Verbs: May, might, should, must, will, etc.

What is a Modal Auxiliary?

A Modal Auxiliary verb is used to express the mood, mode, or attitude of the speaker. Examples include:

- "You should regularly go for a morning walk."
- "They must attend tomorrow's meeting."
- "May I use your pen, please?"
- "You can park the car in front of our house."
- "You may take these books home."
- "Could you open the door, please?"

Most Commonly Used Modals

The most commonly used modals are:

- Can, Could, May, Might
- Should, Would, Must, Ought to
- Am/Was to, Have/Had to, Used to, Need
- Dare, Shall, Will

These modals suggest:

- Permission: "May I come in?"
- Ability: "She can write English well."
- Possibility: "It may rain."
- Suggestion/Advice: "You should stand by your brother."
- Promise: "I will help you."
- Intention: "I shall go there."
- Request: "Could you please lend me some money?"
- Necessity/Compulsion: "You must follow instructions."
- Prohibition: "You cannot enter the room."
- Wish/Prayer: "May you live long!"
- Duty/Obligation: "You ought to serve your motherland."

Different Uses of Modals

May & Might

- Possibility: "It may/might rain."
- Permission: "May I come in?"

- Wish or Prayer: "May you enjoy marital happiness!"
- Purpose: "She works hard so that she may pass."
- Remote Possibility: "It might rain."

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Can & Could

- Ability: "She can write English well." / "Meetu could play cards."
- Polite Request: "Could you please do it for me?"
- Permission/Order: "Yes, you can go now."
- Prohibition/Offer: "You cannot enter the room."
- Possibility: "She could be his wife."

Should

- Duty/Obligation: "You should stand by your brother."
- Future in the Past: "I told him that I should go there."
- Purpose: "Walk carefully lest you should fall."
- Condition: "Should you work hard, you will succeed."
- Should + Have: "You should have stood by your brother."

Must

- Necessity/Obligation: "You must follow instructions."
- Order of the Speaker: "You must not leave now."
- Strong Possibility: "The teacher must be in the class."
- Determination: "I must help him."
- Deduction/Inference: "He must be rich."

Ought to

- Duty/Moral Obligation: "You ought to serve your motherland."
- Ought to + Have: "You ought to have taken care of your wife."

Special Uses and Forms

To be + Infinitive

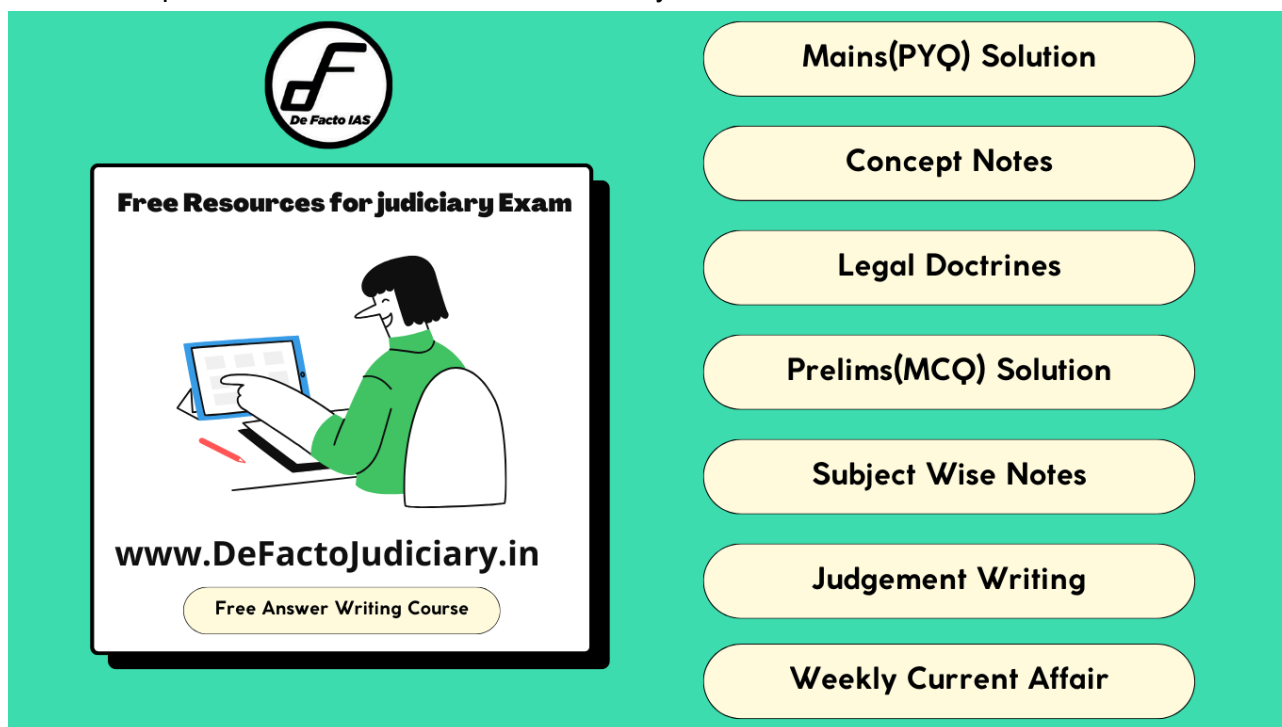
- Plan: "I am to make a speech tomorrow."
- Order: "Students are to wait outside."
- Obligation/Duty: "I am to help my ailing brother."

To be + have

- Unfulfilled Plan: "He was to have attended the marriage but fell ill."

To have + Infinitive

- Compulsion: "I have to leave for Delhi today."



Used To

- Habitual Action: "He used to go to Delhi by car."
- Adjective (accustomed to): "He is used to getting up early."

Would

- Polite Request: "Would you please help my son?"
- Future in the Past: "She told me that she would give me money."
- Wish: "I would like to play now."
- Possibility: "She would be sixteen."

Need & Need Not

- Auxiliary Verb: "He need not go there again."
- Ordinary Verb: "He needs to work hard."

Dare

- Auxiliary Verb: "I dare not go outside now."
- Ordinary Verb: "He dares to abuse his rivals."