Permission, Prohibition, Obligation, No obligation

To express permission, prohibition, obligation and no obligation we usually use modal verbs.

Permission

Can is often used to ask for and give permission.

Can I sit here?
You can use my car if you like.
Can I make a suggestion?

Prohibition

Both can't and mustn't are used to show that something is prohibited – it is not allowed.

You can't park here, sir.
You can wear jeans but you can't wear trainers in that bar.
You mustn't speak when the teacher is speaking.

Can't tells us that something is against the rules.

You can’t go into that restaurant without a tie.
You can’t drive in this country unless you are over eighteen.
You mustn't use your phone in class.

*Can't’ usually gives the idea of something that is against the rules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject</th>
<th>Auxiliary can + not</th>
<th>main verb</th>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
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<td>I can't forget my keys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>can't</td>
<td>be</td>
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Must not, Mustn’t (prohibition)

Mustn’t is usually used when the obligation comes from the person who is speaking.

Must shows us that the obligation comes from the speaker. It isn’t a law or a rule.

I must call my dad tonight.
You must hand in your homework on Tuesday or your mark will be zero.
You must come and visit us the next time you come to London.

We use must not to say that something is not permitted or allowed, for example:

- Passengers must not talk to the driver.
**Structure of Must not**

*Must* is an **auxiliary verb**. It is followed by a **main verb**. The structure for **must not** is:

subject + **must not** + main verb

The main verb is the base verb (infinitive without "to").

**Must not** is often contracted to **mustn't**.

Look at these examples:

<table>
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**NB:** like all auxiliary verbs, **must** **CANNOT** be followed by "to". So, we say:

- You **mustn't** arrive late. *(not You mustn't to arrive late.)*

**Use of Must not**

**Must not** expresses prohibition - something that is **not permitted, not allowed**. The prohibition can be subjective (the speaker's opinion) or objective (a real law or rule). Look at these examples:

- I **mustn't** eat so much sugar. (subjective)
- You **mustn't** watch so much television. (subjective)
- Students **must not** leave bicycles here. (objective)
- Policemen **must not** drink on duty. (objective)

We can use **must not** to talk about the **present** or the **future**:

- Visitors **must not** smoke. (present)
- I **mustn't** forget Tara's birthday. (future)

We cannot use **must not** to talk about the **past**. We use other structures to talk about the past, for example:

- We were not allowed to enter.
- I couldn't park outside the shop.

**Now choose the correct verb for these sentences:**

1. You ___ come to the meeting but it would help us all if you're there.
   (   ) mustn't
   (   ) don't have to

2. I can't get a connection on my phone. ___ I borrow yours?
   (   ) have to
can

3. The rules say that you ___ only invite one guest to the club.
( ) have to
( ) can

4. I ___ stay on for a few hours because I’d rather work late today than over the weekend.
( ) have to
( ) must

5. There’s a lot of noise coming from outside. ___ I close the window?
( ) Could
( ) Must

6. You ___ start saving money if you want to retire early
( ) have to
( ) can

7. Did they tell you that you ___ come into this area. It’s restricted to staff only.
( ) can’t
( ) don’t have to

8. We ___ be there fifteen minutes before the concert starts.
( ) have to
( ) can

Complete the questions with can, must, can’t or mustn’t:

1- The baby has just had his bottle of milk. He ____________________ be hungry!

2- You have lived here for so many years. You ____________________ know a lot of people!

3- He has been on duty all night. He ____________________ be exhausted.

4- She always makes people repeat. She ____________________ be a bit deaf.

5- I wonder who is at the door. It ____________________ be Doris, she is still at work.

6- He knows a lot about biology. He ____________________ be fond of the subject.

7- It has been raining for weeks. The tourists ____________________ enjoy their time!

8- That camping site is always crowded. It ____________________ be a good one.

9- Don’t be stupid, Sam ! You ____________________ believe everything she tells you!