

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.

subject	Auxiliary can + not	main verb	
I	can't	forget	my keys.
You	can't	disturb	him.
Students	can't	be	late.

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:

subject	auxiliary <i>must</i> + not	main verb	
I	mustn't	forget	my keys.
You	mustn't	disturb	him.
Students	must not	be	late.

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.
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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 !