

Namaste English
Mastery Course on Modal Verbs
By Santosh Sir

Modal Verbs Day 7

Introduction to the course

- ❖ It's important that we have the knowledge of modal verbs along with the knowledge of tenses. So, this time we have brought a mastery course for you on Modal Verbs.
- ❖ In this course you will get mastery on Modal Verbs.
- ❖ You will get to know that which modal verb to be used appropriately.
- ❖ Your spoken part will improve.
- ❖ Your written part will be rhetoric, after you have attended all the sessions of this course.

Dare and need

The two verbs *dare* and *need* have characteristics of both modal verbs and main verbs. Because of this, they are called **semi-modals**. They sometimes behave like modal verbs and do not add *-s* to the form that goes with *he, she, and it*. That is, they have no 3rd person singular inflection. They are then followed by the **base form** of a main verb.

- *Need I say more?*
- *Dare I ask how the project's going?*

The past form *needed* is not used as a modal; *dared* is occasionally used as a modal. The modal uses of these verbs are all **negatives** or **questions**.

- *Where will you all be today? – Need you ask?*
- *You needn't come if you're busy.*
- *Dare I suggest that we have a rota system?*
- *I daren't tell him the truth; he'll go crazy.*

Questions that are formed with *need* and *dare* are often set expressions such as *Need I/you ask?*, *Dare I suggest...?* and *Need I/we say more?* *Dare* and *need* sometimes behave like main verbs with *-s* inflection. In this case they are followed by the *to* infinitive. They can also use the auxiliary *do* and have the whole range of tenses appropriate to a main verb.

- *Louisa doesn't need to know.*
- *Does Paul need to go now?*
- *Paul needs to go.*
- *Dare to be different!*
- *I don't dare to mention it to him.*

When *dare* or *need* are used as modal verbs in a positive **statement**, there must be a word of negative meaning in the same clause. This word can be outside the verb phrase and may be a word with a negative sense, such as *only, never, hardly*.

- *He need only ask and I will tell him.*
- *No sensible driver dare risk that chance.*

As a modal verb, *dare* has forms as follows:

I <i>dare</i> not <i>go</i> .	I <i>dared</i> not <i>go</i> .
He <i>dare</i> not <i>go</i> .	He <i>dared</i> not <i>go</i> .

- *Dare I do it?*
- *Dare he do it?*
- *Daren't he do it?*

As a main verb, *dare* has forms as follows:

I <i>dare to do</i> it.	I <i>do</i> not <i>dare to do</i> it.
He <i>dares to do</i> it.	He <i>did</i> not <i>dare to do</i> it.



<i>He does not dare to do it.</i>	<i>Does he dare to do it?</i>
<i>He doesn't dare to do it.</i>	<i>Doesn't he dare to do it?</i>

As a modal verb, *need* has forms as follows:

<i>I need not go.</i>	<i>Need I go?</i>
<i>He need not go.</i>	<i>Need he go?</i>
<i>He needn't go.</i>	<i>Needn't he go?</i>

As a main verb, *need* has forms as follows:

<i>I need it.</i>	<i>I need to do it.</i>
<i>He needs it.</i>	<i>He needs to do it.</i>
<i>I do not need to go.</i>	<i>I do not need to do it.</i>
<i>He does not need to go.</i>	<i>Does he need to go?</i>

- Either of the two forms of *dare* and *need* can be used for sentences that have much the same meaning.
 - *Anna didn't dare to jump off the high fence.*
 - *Anna dared not jump off the high fence.*
 - *You don't need to come if you don't want to.*
 - *You needn't come if you don't want to.*

ought to

Ought to is a semi-modal verb because it is in some ways like a modal verb and in some ways like a main verb. For example, unlike modal verbs, it is followed by *to*, but like modal verbs, it does not change form for person:

I ought to phone my parents.

It ought to be easy now.

Ought to: form

Affirmative

Ought to comes first in the verb phrase (after the subject and before another verb):

We ought to do more exercise.

Ought to cannot be used with another modal verb:



Medicine **ought to** be free.

Not: ~~Medicine ought to can be free.~~ or ~~Medicine can ought to be free.~~

Negative

The negative is formed by adding 'not' after *ought* (*ought not to*). It can be contracted to *oughtn't to*. We don't use *don't*, *doesn't*, *didn't* with *ought to*:

We **ought not to** have ordered so much food.

Not: ~~We don't ought to have ordered so much food.~~

You **oughtn't to** have said that about his mother.

Not: ~~You didn't ought to have said that about his mother.~~

The negative of *ought to* is not common. We usually use *shouldn't* or *should not* instead:

You **shouldn't** speak to your father like that. (preferred to *You oughtn't to speak ...*)

Questions

The subject and *ought to* change position to form questions. We don't use *do*, *does*, *did*:

Ought she to call the police?

Not: ~~Does she ought to call the police?~~

Ought we to be more worried about the environment?

Not: ~~Do we ought to be more worried about the environment?~~

Warning:

The question form of *ought to* is not very common. It is very formal. We usually use *should* instead.

Ought to: uses

What is desired or ideal

We use *ought to* when talking about things which are desired or ideal:

*They **ought to** have more parks in the city centre.*

*We **ought to** eat lots of fruit and vegetables every day.*

We use *ought to have* + *-ed* form to talk about things that were desired or ideal in the past but which didn't happen. It can express regret:

*We **ought to have locked** the gate. Then the dog *wouldn't have got out*. (The ideal or desired thing was that we locked the gate, but we didn't.)*



*I often think that I **ought to have studied** medicine not pharmacy. (I would be happier now if I had studied medicine.)*

What is likely

We can use *ought to* when we talk about what is likely or probable:

*The concert **ought to only take about two hours so we'll be home by 12 pm.***

*There **ought to be some good films at the cinema this weekend.***

Ought to or should?

Ought to and *should* are similar in meaning. *Should* is more common than *ought to*. *Ought to* is more formal than *should*:

*There **ought to be more street lights here.** (means the same as **There should be more street lights here.**)*

*I really **ought to walk my dog more. He's so fat.** (means the same as I really **should walk my dog more. He's so fat.**)*

Spoken English:

In speaking, we normally use *should* as a tag for clauses with *ought to*:

*There **ought to be a speed limit here, shouldn't there?** (preferred to *There ought to be a speed limit here, oughtn't there?*)*

*We **ought not to have to pay for basic medicines, should we?** (preferred to *We ought not to have to pay for basic medicines, ought we?*)*

About the Instructor

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Santosh Sir has wide teaching experience of more than 5 years in English Language and Literature. He is an ex-faculty of Exam Mitra Institute, Delhi. Students have known him as a teacher who makes English Learning easy by his short methods and tricks.

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