ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Modals MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 4

English Grammar Tests · 20 questions · Online test and questions PDF: https://englishtestsonline.com/modals-test-4/

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Explanations

1. I looked through this book for about 2 hours, but _____ find anything interesting.
✔ **B) couldn't**
The sentence is about the past (**looked**), so we use the past form of **can**: **couldn't**. It means it was not possible for me to find anything. Not **can't**, because that is present.

2. You _____ do this because it's necessary.
✔ **C) have to**
Have to expresses obligation, and the clue is **because it's necessary**. Not **may** or **can**, because they show permission or possibility, not necessity.

3. You _____ work hard at your English.
✔ **A) must**
Must gives strong advice or obligation: **You must work hard.** Not **has to**, because with **you** we say **have to**, not **has to**.

4. We _____ read much in the original if we want to learn a foreign language.
✔ **C) must**
Must shows that something is necessary. The clue is **if we want to learn a foreign language**: reading in the original is necessary for that. Not **had to**, because the sentence is about the present, not the past.

5. We _____ do it by midday if we had the instruments.
✔ **D) could**
This is a second conditional (**if we had**), so the main clause needs **would** or **could** + verb. **Could** means 'would be able to': **We could do it if we had the instruments.** Not **will** or **can**, because they are used in the first conditional with a present-tense if-clause.

6. You _____ get a visa before you go abroad next summer.
✔ **E) will have to**
Must has no future form, so for a future obligation we use **will have to**. The clue is **next summer**. Not **had to**, because that is past.

7. If you want to improve your English you _____ work very hard.
✔ **E) must**
Must shows that something is necessary: hard work is needed to improve your English. Not **had to**, because the sentence is about the present and future, not the past.

8. You've been traveling all day. You _____ be very tired.
✔ **A) must**
Must shows we are almost sure something is true. The clue is **You've been traveling all day**, so you are surely tired. Not **might**, because that shows only a weak possibility, and the clue makes us quite sure.

9. My eyesight isn't very good. I _____ wear glasses for reading.
✔ **B) have to**
Have to shows an obligation that comes from a situation, here bad eyesight. Not **might** or **may**, because the sentence is not about possibility.

10. He _____ agree with your suggestion.
✔ **A) may not**
May not means 'perhaps he will not': **He may not agree.** The other options do not fit **he**: we say **he needs**, **he is able to**, **he is to**, **he has to**.

11. My son fell ill yesterday, so I _____ stay at home.
✔ **E) had to**
For an obligation in the past we use **had to**, because **must** has no past form. The clue is **yesterday**. Not **must**, because it refers to the present or future.

12. I will not read this book, but you _____ do it if you want.
✔ **A) can**
Can gives permission: you are free to do it. The clue is **if you want**. Not **have to** or **must**, because they show obligation, and that does not fit **if you want**.

13. _____ you show me those black shoes? How much are they?
✔ **C) can**
We use **Can you…?** to ask someone to do something: **Can you show me those shoes?** Not **may**, because **May I…?** asks for permission and is not used with **you** for requests.

14. I _____ leave the party early last night, because I wasn't very well.
✔ **E) had to**
Had to is the past of **must/have to** and shows a past obligation. The clue is **last night** and the reason **I wasn't very well**. Not **could**, because that means I was able to, not that I needed to.

15. She _____ lift me up with one hand.
✔ **C) can**
Can shows ability: she is strong enough to do it. After **she** we need a modal with no **to**, so **to have to** and **to be able to** are wrong.

16. You _____ work if you don't want to.
✔ **C) needn't**
Needn't means it is not necessary. The clue is **if you don't want to**. Not **must not**, because that means it is forbidden, not that it is unnecessary.

17. You _____ come and have dinner with us some day.
✓ **E) must**
You must… can be a warm, strong invitation: **You must come and have dinner with us!** Not **had to**, because the invitation is about the future, not the past.

18. It was very difficult to hear. I _____ understand what she was saying.
✓ **D) couldn't**
Couldn't is the past of **can't** and shows no ability in the past. The clues are **was** and **was saying**. Not **can't** or **am not able to**, because they are present.

19. He said that I _____ look around.
✓ **A) might**
In reported speech after a past verb (**He said**), **may** usually changes to **might**, so his words **You may look around** become **He said that I might look around**. Not **might to**, because a modal is never followed by **to**.

20. The teacher told us that we _____ work harder at our English.
✓ **E) had to**
In reported speech after **told**, **must** (obligation) usually becomes **had to**. The teacher's words **You must work harder** become **He told us that we had to work harder**. Not **have**, because it needs **to**. Not **has to**, because it does not go with **we**.

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