



## Modal Verbs for Expressing Possibility

Modal	Logical Possibility	Degree of Certainty
∅	FACT: Water boils at 100° C.	HIGH 
will	CERTAINTY: Gas <b>will</b> burn when ignited.	1
must	CONCLUSION: The child <b>must</b> be upset.	2
should	PROBABILITY: Aspirin <b>should</b> help you.	3
can	CAPABILITY: This car <b>can</b> do 150 m.p.h.	4
may	POSSIBILITY: Lead <b>may</b> cause illness.	5
could	CHANCE: The disease <b>could</b> be fatal.	6
might	CHANCE: It <b>might</b> rain tomorrow.	LOW 7 

### Exercise

*Directions:* Circle the word that best describes the meaning of the modal in the sentence.

- command      certainty      Female lions **will** defend their cubs from males.
- requirement      conclusion      The plane **must** have mechanical problems.
- obligation      probability      Doctors **should** have a pleasant bedside manner.
- opportunity      capability      This knife **can** cut bread bread easily.
- opportunity      possibility      Aluminum **may** be the cause of Alzheimer's disease.
- suggestion      chance      Alice's mother **could** increase her daily exercise.
- suggestion      chance      Henry **might** be allergic to dairy products.