**Auxiliary Verbs**

Auxiliary, or helping verbs, are used before infinitives to add a different meaning. For example, you use auxiliary verbs to say:

* that someone is able to do something,
* that someone is allowed to do something, or
* that someone has to do something.

The helping verbs are can, could, would, should, ought to, will, shall, may,

might and must.

Can and could

Use can and could to say that someone is able to do something.

* She **can** draw really good pictures.
* Philip **can** run faster than Matt.
* **Can** you ride a bike?
* **Can** you help me with my homework?
* She **could** already read before she started school.
* Our teacher said we **could** go home early.
* I ran as fast as I **could.**
* Sarah **could** not come to the party because she was ill.

**You may also use can and could to say that someone is allowed to do something.**

* My mum says you can come to our house for dinner.
* Dad says I can’t walk to school on my own.
* You can’t go in there without a ticket.
* Mom said I could have ice cream after my dinner.
* The big sign on the gate said PRIVATE, so we couldn’t go in.

**Can and could are also used for asking for information or help, for offering something, and for suggesting something.**

* Can you tell me if this train goes to Topeka?
* Could you show me where the accident happened?
* Could you open that window, please?
* You can borrow my pen, if you like.
* Your sister could come with us, if she wanted to.
* I could lend you my football.
* We can go to the library instead.
* You could ask your dad to help us.
* John can borrow his brother’s skates.

Will and would

**Use will and would when you are asking someone to do something.**

* Will you please stop making that noise?
* Would you pass me that book, please?
* Please, will you close the door?

**You can also use will and would to offer something or to suggest something.**

* Will I hold this end of the rope?
* Will I carry the bag for you?
* Would you like another drink?
* Which cake would you like?

Shall and should

**You can use shall and should to ask for advice, offer something and suggest something.**

* Should I bring waterproof clothes? Shall I go by car, or will it be better to walk?
* Should I phone the police? Shall I help you with that heavy bag?
* Shall we go home now? You should try that new French restaurant.

Ought to

**You use ought to make strong suggestions and talk about someone’s duty.**

* You look tired. You ought to go to bed early tonight.
* I ought to get more physical exercise.
* We ought to lock the door when we leave home.
* You ought to turn off the computer when you’re not using it.
* You ought to know how to spell your own name.
* The teacher ought to make his classes more interesting.

Must

**Use must to talk about things that you have to do.**

* I must mail this letter today.
* You must speak louder. I can’t hear you.
* Children must not play with matches.
* Go to bed now. Oh, must I?
* Why must I do my homework tonight?

May and might

**Use may to ask if you are allowed to do something and to tell someone that they are allowed to do something.**

* “May I go out to play now?” “Yes, you may.”
* May I borrow your pen?
* Please may I see your ticket?
* John may leave now, but Sally may not.
* May Kenny come with us to the movies?

**Use may and might to talk about things that are possible or likely.**

* Take an umbrella. It might rain.
* I may not have time to go swimming tonight.
* We might go to the party later.
* If you’re not careful, you may hurt yourself.
* “Are you going to the concert?” “I don’t know. I might or I might not.”

Verb Phrases

**A verb phrase consists of a verb and a preposition such as after, into and over.**

**The preposition gives the verb a special meaning.**

**Here are some sentences that contain phrasal verbs. Read the meanings below:**

* Who looks after (= takes care of) the baby when your parents are at work?
* Mike has blond hair and blue eyes. He takes after (= looks like) his mother.
* Dad bumped into (= met by chance) an old friend at the station.
* My sister is getting into (= is starting to be interested in) pop music.
* Is your mom getting over (= recovering from) her illness?
* Some health inspectors came to look over
* (= inspect) the factory.
* We hoped that the thieves wouldn’t get away with
* (= escape punishment for) their crime.
* I’m going to the store because we’ve run out of rice (= used all our rice).