

# Modal auxiliary verbs exercise

Complete the following sentences using appropriate modal auxiliary verbs. The meaning that you need to convey is given in the brackets.

1. You ..... not spit on the road.  
(Prohibition)

must  
will  
may

2. You ..... not steal. (Prohibition)

may  
can  
must

3. She ..... behave herself. (Necessity)

must  
will  
would

4. We ..... obey the rules. (Obligation)

should  
shall

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may

5. If you have finished your job, you .....  
go. (Permission)

may  
will  
can

6. I ..... speak four languages. (Ability)

can  
may  
could

7. She ..... read when she was just  
three years old. (Past ability)

can  
could  
would

8. He ..... stand on his head. (Ability)

can

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will  
may

9. My grandmother is eighty. She ..... still read without glasses. (Ability)

can  
may  
could

10. .... I borrow your camera? (Permission)

Please select 2 correct answers

Can  
May  
Shall

11. 'I'm starving.' 'I ..... get you something to eat.' (Willingness)

will  
would  
should

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## Answers

1. You must not spit on the road. (Prohibition)
2. You must not steal. (Prohibition)
3. She must behave herself. (Necessity)
4. We should obey the rules. (Use must to express strong obligation.)
5. If you have finished your job, you may go. (Can is possible in a less formal style.)
6. I can speak four languages.
7. She could read when she was just three years old.
8. He can stand on his head.
9. My grandmother is eighty. She can still read without glasses.
10. Can / May I borrow your camera?
11. 'I'm starving.' 'I will get you something to eat.'