

should

must

might

MODAL AUXILIARY
VERBS

shall

can

may

could

INTRODUCTION

- ◆ There are 12 modals (4 paired and 4 single forms)

- *Can, could*
- *May, might*
- *Shall, should*
- *Will, would*
- *Must*
- *Ought*
- *Need* (it contrasts grammatically with the regular verb *to need*; as a modal it is used only in negative and interrogative sentences)
- *Dare* (it can follow the grammatical patterns of either modal auxiliaries or lexical, 'regular' verb; as a modal it is used only in negative and interrogative sentences)

The principal distinctive formal features

- ❖ Negative sentences are formed by adding NOT after the modal verb
- ❖ Interrogative sentences are formed by INVERTING the subject and the modal verb
- ❖ There is NO -S ending in the third person singular in the present tense
- ❖ The modal verbs are FOLLOWED BY THE INFINITIVE of a verb without to (except in the case of *ought*)
- ❖ They have NO INFINITIVE forms, and NO PARTICIPLE forms
- ❖ The modal verbs are also LIMITED in their range of TIME REFERENCE

They express concepts or attitudes relating to

- I. recommendation, obligation, necessity, and prohibition; permission and refusal; promise and intention, ability and willingness;

He must go now.

She can swim.

- II. possibility, expectation, probability and certainty;

He must be at home now.

She should be at school.