

What are Modal Verbs in Present Tense?

Worksheet

Modal verbs express attitude toward an action and are always followed by an infinitive verb. In the present tense, the modal is conjugated and the infinitive goes at the end: 'Ich kann Deutsch sprechen' (I can speak German).

Questions

1. Which modal verb means 'be able to / can'?
A) müssen
B) können
C) dürfen
D) wollen
2. Correct conjugation for 'I want to study'?
A) Ich wollen studieren
B) Ich will studieren
C) Ich wille studieren
D) Ich wollt studieren
3. Which sentence uses a modal correctly?
A) Er kann spielen fußball
B) Er kann fußball spielen
C) Er fußball kann spielen
D) Er spielen kann fußball
4. What does 'Sie sollen pünktlich kommen' mean?
A) She wants to come on time
B) She is able to come on time
C) She should/is supposed to come on time
D) She likes to come on time
5. Conjugate 'können' (can) in present tense for 'I, you, he' with 'spielen' (to play).
6. Form a sentence with 'müssen' (must) and 'arbeiten' (to work) for 'we': present tense.
7. Conjugate 'dürfen' (may) in present for 'you formal' (Sie) with 'fragen' (to ask).
8. Define: What is a modal verb?
9. Define: Six main German modal verbs?
10. Define: Where does the infinitive go with a modal verb?

Answer Key

1. B) können — 'Können' expresses ability or permission in a more general sense.
2. B) Ich will studieren — 'Will' is the first person singular form of 'wollen' in present tense.
3. B) Er kann fußball spielen — The infinitive 'spielen' goes at the end, after the object 'fußball'.
4. C) She should/is supposed to come on time — 'Sollen' expresses obligation or what one is supposed to do.
5. ich kann spielen du kannst spielen er kann spielen
6. wir müssen arbeiten (We must work)
7. Sie dürfen fragen (You may ask)
8. A verb that expresses ability, necessity, permission, obligation or intention. Always followed by an infinitive.
9. können, müssen, dürfen, wollen, sollen, mögen
10. At the end of the main clause: 'Ich kann Auto fahren' (I can drive a car).

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