

# Modals of Advice

## Table of Contents

- 2 QUICK AND HANDY GRAMMAR REVIEW**  
**Modals of Advice**
- 3 EXERCISE 1**  
*Rewrite the sentences using should.*
- 4 EXERCISE 2**  
*Write suggestions using should, ought to, and had better.*
- 5 EXERCISE 3**  
*Write questions using should.*
- 6 EXERCISE 4**  
*Write short answers using should and had better.*
- 7 EXERCISE 5**  
*Rewrite the negative sentences using should and had better.*
- 8 EXERCISE 6**  
*Rewrite the sentences with appropriate suggestions of your own.*
- 9 EXERCISE 7**  
*Write 10 suggestions using should, ought to, or had better.*

## Quick and Handy Grammar Review

### MODALS OF ADVICE

Modals (also known as *modal verbs*) are words that come before a main verb and give it extra meaning such as *ability, advice, necessity, possibility*, etc. Modals of Advice are used for giving advice, suggestions, and recommendations.

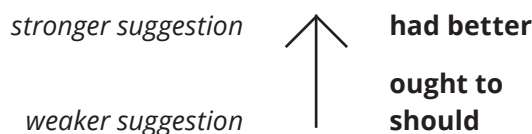
#### 1. Modal Pattern

##### MODAL + BASE VERB

Modals are always followed by a base verb.  
A base verb is a verb with **no ending** (-s, -ed, -ing, etc.) added to it.

#### 2. Suggestion Scale

There are three common modals of advice in English: *should*, *ought to*, and *had better*. *Had better* is a stronger suggestion than *should* and *ought to*.



#### 3. Usage

##### Should

*Should* is the most common modal of advice.

##### Ought to

*Ought to* is more formal than *should*, and it is becoming more and more old-fashioned in American English. On the rare occasions that it is used in speaking, it is often pronounced "oughta" (/ʌdə/). *Ought to* is a slightly stronger suggestion than *should*, but the difference is not important. *Ought to* is not used in questions and is rarely used in negative sentences.

##### Had better

*Had better* is common when making a stronger suggestion. It is often shortened to '*d better*. *Had better* is not used in questions. In casual speaking, *had* is sometimes dropped.

#### 4. Sentence Patterns

**Positive:** You should study tonight.  
You ought to study tonight.  
You had better study tonight.  
You'd better study tonight.  
You better study tonight.\*

**Negative:** You should not go out tonight.  
You shouldn't go out tonight.  
You ought not (to) go out tonight.\*\*  
You oughtn't go out tonight.\*\*  
You had better not go out tonight.  
You'd better not go out tonight.  
You better not go out tonight.\*

**Question:** Should I go out tonight?

\*Had can be dropped in casual speaking.

\*\*Negative forms of *ought to* are very rarely used. If used, *to* is usually dropped.

## Exercise 1

Rewrite the sentences using *should*.

1. My brother never gets up on time.

My brother should get up on time.

2. My coworker never eats lunch.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. My neighbor doesn't speak to the people in the neighborhood.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. My friend doesn't get much sleep at night.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. The cashier never gives the correct change.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. My classmates don't study hard.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Mr. Roberts doesn't read the morning paper.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. She doesn't get enough vitamins.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. They aren't careful with their reports.

\_\_\_\_\_

10. He never exercises.

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 2

Pretend you're a school counselor giving advice to students. Write suggestions using *should*, *ought to*, and *had better*. Then have a conversation with a partner. Take turns being the counselor and a student whose grades are slipping.

### SHOULD:

1. study / two hours / a night

*You should study two hours a night.*

---

2. get / eight hours of sleep / every night

---

3. ask your teachers for help / after class

---

4. ignore / friends who try to talk to you / during class

---

### OUGHT TO:

5. read / a chapter / a night

---

6. do / your homework / right after school

---

### HAD BETTER:

7. concentrate / during class

---

8. study / before your final exams

---

## Exercise 3

Change the sentences into questions using *should*.

1. She hasn't finished her homework yet. (go out)

Should she go out tonight?

2. He didn't tell me what to do. (ask)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. My roommate needs to buy some new clothes. (go shopping)

\_\_\_\_\_

4. They aren't sure where the restaurant is. (ask)

\_\_\_\_\_

5. We need to plan our date. (call)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. She didn't hand in the report on time. (apologize)

\_\_\_\_\_

7. I have a cold today. (take)

\_\_\_\_\_

8. They forgot to tell me when they'll be in town. (email)

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Her doctor's appointment conflicts with her piano lesson. (cancel)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. He has a test next week. (study)

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 4

Write short answers using *should* and *had better*.

1. Should I have junk food for dinner? (no, had better)

No, you'd better not.

2. Should I take vitamins every day? (yes, should)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Should I study for the test tomorrow? (yes, had better)

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Should I go out instead of studying? (no, should)

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Should I call my mom on her birthday? (yes, had better)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Should I watch TV late at night? (no, should)

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Should I visit my friend in the hospital? (yes, should)

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Should I buy all these expensive clothes? (no, had better)

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Should I show up at the party I wasn't invited to? (no, should)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Should I practice speaking English every day? (yes, should)

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 5

### A. Classroom Advice

Rewrite the negative sentences using *should* and *had better*.

1. Don't run with scissors.

You shouldn't run with scissors.

2. Don't speak your native language in class.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Don't be late for school.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Don't interrupt the teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Don't chew gum in class.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Don't tease your classmates.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Don't play music in class.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Don't eat during the lesson.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Don't text your friends in class.

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Don't daydream when you're supposed to be working.

\_\_\_\_\_

### B. Crazy Class Rules

With a partner, write some positive and negative sentences using *should* and *had better*.  
Think of some crazy rules for your class!

#### Examples:

- You'd better sing a song when you enter the classroom.
- You shouldn't do your homework.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 6

Rewrite each of the sentences from Exercise 1 with an appropriate suggestion of your own.

1. My brother never gets up on time.

*He should set his alarm the night before.*

---

2. My coworker never eats lunch.

---

3. My neighbor doesn't speak to the people in the neighborhood.

---

4. My friend doesn't get much sleep at night.

---

5. The cashier never gives the correct change.

---

6. My classmates don't study hard.

---

7. Mr. Roberts doesn't read the morning paper.

---

8. She doesn't get enough vitamins.

---

9. They aren't careful with their reports.

---

10. He never exercises.

---



## Exercise 7

Write 10 suggestions for a tourist in your hometown using *should*, *ought to*, or *had better*. Include positive and negative sentences.

**Examples:**

- You should try Jack's Diner for breakfast.
- You'd better not park on the street overnight or you'll get towed.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_