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Use of must, should and ought to

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In your day to day conversations, you might have come across words such as should, must etc. Especially, in your office when you are busy with too much work, your boss calls you and says, “You must complete it by the end of the day”. He could have even said, “You should complete it by the end of the day”. There is a difference between the usage of should and must. To focus on how to use it properly, is what English is all about.



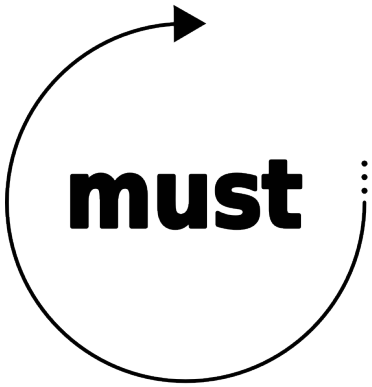
In this article we will focus on modal verbs which create confusion in the speakers when they use them in a sentence. **Must**, **should** and **ought to** are the words that fall under modal verbs and have different uses. Modal verbs of obligation are of two types, firstly, firm obligation, in which word like must exist, and secondly, moral obligation where we find words like should and ought to.

Must:

As discussed above, it comes under the category of firm obligation. You use ‘must’ in a sentence where there is a necessity. It is used in a confirmatory way and dictates the thing to happen it the way it is addressed. It is a sort of an order giving sentence.

Examples:

· We must protect the environment from getting destroyed.
· He must go to the college.
· Jack must learn the table manners.
· Carl must have done something wrong, that is why he is jailed.
· She must be at the fresher’s party.



‘Must’ is stronger than the other obligatory words like should and ought to. , The word ‘must’ is used very often in all those laws, rules and orders we have come across in our life

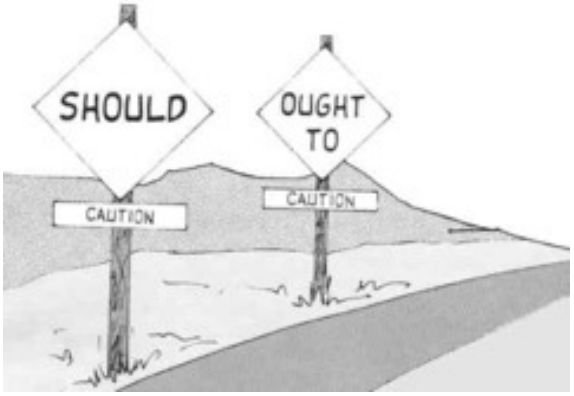
· You must not go beyond the walls.
· You must find a job to settle in your life.

Should and ought to:

Where must is like an order, should and ought to are more like a suggestion or an advice. Both these words are almost similar, and fall under same category of moral obligation. These words can be replaced with each other. It is also used in the circumstances where we could predict something will eventually happen.

Examples:

· Victor should not go for the tournament.
· He should be telling the truth.
· He ought to watch the movie since he did not read the book.



Now, it is test time. Let us check how much you have learnt about using must, should and ought to.

1. You ____ be kidding me.
2. Everybody _____ be punctual.
3. He _____ start thinking about his daughter.
4. She ____ be around by now.
5. He _____ concentrate more on his studies.

Answers:

1. Must
2. Should
3. Should/ought to

4. Should
5. Must

We hope the above explanation will help you toimprove your English and make you an efficient speaker. An onlineSpoken English course can help you overcome your difficulties.

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-By Shailja Varma

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