

Unit 36: OTHER MODAL CONSTRUCTIONS

These constructions are not grammatically the same as modal verbs (Unit 27), but they have a modal meaning. We always use the base form of the verb (Unit 14) after them.

1 *Be able to*

We use it to talk about ability. It is more polite than **can** (Unit 28) or **could** (Unit 29).

Will you **be able to attend** the class today?

I'm afraid I may not **be able to attend**.

Unfortunately, I **wasn't able to attend** the class yesterday.

2 *Ought to*

We use it for advice, necessity and probability (exactly the same way as **should** in Unit 33).

You **ought not to take** it without asking.

I think we **ought to have** apologized.

It **ought to be** on the top shelf.

3 *Have got to*

We use it to talk about necessity for present or future time (the same as **have to** in Unit 34).

Have you **got to work** tomorrow?

I've **got to finish** this report before I go home.

4 *Had better*

We use it for advice and necessity for a particular present or future time. It is stronger than **ought to** (above) or **should** (Unit 33).

I think you'd **better get** some new clothes for the interview.

We'd **better be** quick or we'll miss the bus.

You'd **better not be** late again or I'll be very angry.

NOTICE: We nearly always use the short form of **had**.