

Using modal auxiliaries

Modal auxiliaries are used to express a wide variety of meanings in English. For example, they can be used to defend arguments and explain preferences.

Modal auxiliaries cannot be used alone. They are added to the base form of verbs in order to express possibility, ability, desire etc.

Forms of the infinitive

The infinitive is the base form of the verb. Infinitives can be in the active or passive form.

The table given below shows the active and passive forms of the infinitive 'take' in different tense forms.

Form	Active	Passive
Simple	To take	To be taken
Continuous	To be taking
Perfect	To have taken	To have been taken
Perfect continuous	To have been taking

Active and passive forms of infinitive take without to

Form	Active	Passive
Simple	Take	Be taken
Continuous	Be taking
Perfect	Have taken	Have been taken

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Perfect continuous	Have been taking
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By adding a modal auxiliary verb to the base form of the infinitive, we can form a verb.

Using the modals may and might

The modals might and may both show possibility. They express indecision or uncertainty about present, future, or past actions or states.

Simple

Might take / might be taken

May take / may be taken

I may take a vacation sometime soon.

I might take a break now.

This sentence can refer to both present and future time.

Simple continuous

Might be taking

May be taking

John isn't in his office. He might be taking a break.

Perfect

Might have taken / might have been taken

May have taken / may have been taken

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I might have taken the wrong decision.

This sentence refers to the past.

Perfect continuous

Might have been taking

May have been taking

Susie wasn't home when I called. She might have been taking a rest.

This sentence refers to the past.