

Modal auxiliaries

➤ Using modal auxiliaries

When you speak, you introduce opinions with phrases like *I think*, *In my opinion*, and *I believe*. In general, these introductory phrases are not needed in writing. They can even make you sound less sure of your ideas. Instead, writers use grammatical methods such as modal auxiliary verbs to express their opinions. Modal auxiliary verbs show the strength of a writer's opinion or argument.

AFFIRMATIVE:			
The city	could	add more bike paths.	weakest
	should		▼
	ought to		
	has to / must		strongest
NEGATIVE:			
The city	doesn't have to	allow more cars.	weakest
	shouldn't		▼
	can't / must not		strongest

- 7** Look again at the paragraph in exercise 1 on page 33. Circle the modal auxiliaries. How strong do you think the writer's opinions were? Discuss with a partner.
- 8** Read the paragraph below. Circle the most appropriate modal auxiliary in each sentence.

Dear Editor,

I agree with Bill Adams's opinion in his recent letter saying that people ^a *should* / *don't have to* ride their bicycles into town. However, there is one problem with this idea. The roads in town are so narrow and full of cars that you ^b *can't* / *ought to* ride safely on them. If people are going to ride bicycles into town, the city ^c *could* / *must* make some bike paths for people to use. Maybe the city ^d *could* / *mustn't* charge a small additional tax on fuel to pay for the bike paths. Motorists have created the problem, so motorists ^e *could* / *should* pay for the solution. The city ^f *ought to* / *doesn't have to* support cyclists like Bill Adams by building more bike paths.

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