

Advanced Modal Verbs: past deduction, needn't have, had better, modal passives

C1 / C2 Advanced

Student Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: ____ / 56

Exercise 1 — True or False? (8 points)

Read each statement. Write **True** or **False**.

1. "Must have" + past participle is used to make a certain positive deduction about the past.

Answer: _____

2. "Needn't have done" and "didn't need to do" always mean the same thing.

Answer: _____

3. "Was/were able to" is preferred over "could" when describing a specific achievement on one occasion.

Answer: _____

4. "Had better" expresses weaker advice than "should".

Answer: _____

5. Modal passives are formed with modal + be + past participle.

Answer: _____

6. "Can't have" is used when we are almost certain something happened in the past.

Answer: _____

7. "Needn't have" implies the action was completed even though it was not necessary.

Answer: _____

8. "Might have" expresses more certainty than "must have" about a past event.

Answer: _____

Exercise 2 — Multiple Choice (8 points)

Choose the correct option. Circle your answer.

1. The office is dark and locked. Everyone ____ gone home.

(must have / might have / can't have)

2. She ____ cheated — she was being supervised the entire time.

(can't have / must have / might have)

3. I'm not sure where he is. He ____ taken the wrong train.

(might have / must have / can't have)

4. You ____ waited for me — I told you I'd be late. But thank you anyway.

(needn't have / didn't need to / had better)

5. She ____ prepare a presentation because the client cancelled.

(didn't need to / needn't have / had better not)

6. Despite the technical problems, the team ____ deliver the project on time.

(were able to / could / had better)

7. You ____ read the contract carefully before you sign anything.

(had better / must have / might have)

8. All complaints ____ submitted in writing within 14 days.

(must be / must have / had better)

Exercise 3 — Matching (8 points)

Match each sentence (1–8) to its correct meaning (a–h). Write the letter.

Sentences	Meanings
1. She must have misunderstood the instructions. ____	A. A certain positive deduction about the past.
2. He can't have seen the email — he would have replied. ____	B. A certain negative deduction about the past.
3. They might have already left by the time we arrived. ____	C. An uncertain possibility about the past.
4. You needn't have stayed late — we finished early in the end. ____	D. <u>The</u> action was done, but it was not necessary.
5. She didn't need to bring anything, so she came empty-handed. ____	E. <u>The</u> action was not done because it was not necessary.
6. Against all odds, he was able to complete the race. ____	F. A specific achievement successfully accomplished.
7. You'd better not mention this to anyone. ____	G. Strong advice with an implied warning.
8. The report must be approved before publication. ____	H. An obligation expressed without naming the agent.

Exercise 4 — Gap Fill (8 points)

Choose the correct modal form from the brackets.

1. The car is gone and the lights are off — they ____ left hours ago.

(must have / might have / can't have)

2. She ____ known about the restructure — she was the last to find out.

(can't have / must have / might have)

3. I'm not certain, but he ____ misread the address.

(might have / must have / can't have)

4. You ____ cooked so much — there's just the two of us!

(needn't have / didn't need to / had better)

5. He ____ attend the induction because he already knew the system.

(didn't need to / needn't have / must have)

6. After three failed attempts, she ____ unlock the file using a recovery tool.

(was able to / could / must have)

7. You ____ check the expiry date before using that medication.

('d better / must have / might have)

8. All data ____ encrypted before it is stored on external servers.

(must be / must have / had better)

Exercise 5 — Word Order (8 points)

Put the words in the correct order to make a sentence.

1. must / forgotten / She / the / have / meeting

2. He / report / have / the / can't / read

3. They / different / a / taken / might / route / have

4. needn't / time / of / have / We / plenty / worried / — we / have

5. to / were / negotiate / They / a / deal / able

6. not / You'd / this / mention / anyone / to / better

7. reviewed / must / The / carefully / contract / be

8. complete / was / She / the / able / to / course

Exercise 6 — Word Sort (8 points)

Write each sentence in the correct column of the table below.

Word bank: The keys are missing — someone must have moved them. | She can't have received the notification — she never saw it. | They might have misunderstood the brief. | You needn't have printed it — I already had a copy. | He didn't need to rewrite the whole section, so he just edited it. | We needn't have worried — everything went perfectly. | Despite the setbacks, they were able to launch on schedule. | I was able to speak to the manager after waiting for an hour. | She was able to resolve the dispute without going to court. | All invoices must be authorised by the finance team. | You'd better double-check those figures before the presentation. | The findings ought to be shared with all stakeholders.

Past Deduction (must/can't/ might have)	Needn't have / Didn't need to	Specific Past Achievement (was/were able to)	Modal Passive / Had better
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Exercise 7 — Complete the Conversation (8 points)

Choose the correct modal form from the brackets.

A: Did you hear? The server crashed. It ____ been mortifying for the team.

(must have / might have / can't have)

B: Someone ____ tested the setup properly beforehand.

(can't have / must have / might have)

A: Or they ____ been using an outdated version of the software.

(might have / must have / needn't have)

B: The whole thing ____ investigated before the next event.

(should be / must have / had better)

A: We ____ not use that venue again without checking their systems first.

('d better / must have / might have)

B: Oh — you ____ stayed to help clear up, by the way. But thank you.

(needn't have / didn't need to / must have)

Exercise 1 — True or False?

1. "Must have" + past participle is used to make a certain positive deduction about the past.
✓ **True**
 2. "Needn't have done" and "didn't need to do" always mean the same thing.
✓ **False**
 3. "Was/were able to" is preferred over "could" when describing a specific achievement on one occasion.
✓ **True**
 4. "Had better" expresses weaker advice than "should".
✓ **False**
 5. Modal passives are formed with modal + be + past participle.
✓ **True**
 6. "Can't have" is used when we are almost certain something happened in the past.
✓ **False**
 7. "Needn't have" implies the action was completed even though it was not necessary.
✓ **True**
 8. "Might have" expresses more certainty than "must have" about a past event.
✓ **False**
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Exercise 2 — Multiple Choice

1. The office is dark and locked. Everyone ____ gone home.
✓ **must have**
2. She ____ cheated — she was being supervised the entire time.
✓ **can't have**
3. I'm not sure where he is. He ____ taken the wrong train.
✓ **might have**
4. You ____ waited for me — I told you I'd be late. But thank you anyway.
✓ **needn't have**
5. She ____ prepare a presentation because the client cancelled.
✓ **didn't need to**
6. Despite the technical problems, the team ____ deliver the project on time.

✓ **were able to**

7. You ____ read the contract carefully before you sign anything.

✓ **had better**

8. All complaints ____ submitted in writing within 14 days.

✓ **must be**

Exercise 3 — Matching

1. She must have misunderstood the instructions.

✓ **A certain positive deduction about the past.**

2. He can't have seen the email — he would have replied.

✓ **A certain negative deduction about the past.**

3. They might have already left by the time we arrived.

✓ **An uncertain possibility about the past.**

4. You needn't have stayed late — we finished early in the end.

✓ **The action was done, but it was not necessary.**

5. She didn't need to bring anything, so she came empty-handed.

✓ **The action was not done because it was not necessary.**

6. Against all odds, he was able to complete the race.

✓ **A specific achievement successfully accomplished.**

7. You'd better not mention this to anyone.

✓ **Strong advice with an implied warning.**

8. The report must be approved before publication.

✓ **An obligation expressed without naming the agent.**

Exercise 4 — Gap Fill

1. The car is gone and the lights are off — they ____ left hours ago.

✓ **must have**

2. She ____ known about the restructure — she was the last to find out.

✓ **can't have**

3. I'm not certain, but he ____ misread the address.

✓ **might have**

4. You ____ cooked so much — there's just the two of us!

✓ **needn't have**

5. He ____ attend the induction because he already knew the system.

✓ didn't need to

6. After three failed attempts, she ____ unlock the file using a recovery tool.

✓ was able to

7. You ____ check the expiry date before using that medication.

✓ 'd better

8. All data ____ encrypted before it is stored on external servers.

✓ must be

Exercise 5 — Word Order

1. ✓ She must have forgotten the meeting

2. ✓ He can't have read the report

3. ✓ They might have taken a different route

4. ✓ We needn't have worried — we have plenty of time

5. ✓ They were able to negotiate a deal

6. ✓ You'd better not mention this to anyone

7. ✓ The contract must be reviewed carefully

8. ✓ She was able to complete the course

Exercise 6 — Word Sort

Past Deduction (must/can't/might have):

✓ The keys are missing — someone must have moved them.

✓ She can't have received the notification — she never saw it.

✓ They might have misunderstood the brief.

Needn't have / Didn't need to:

✓ You needn't have printed it — I already had a copy.

✓ He didn't need to rewrite the whole section, so he just edited it.

✓ We needn't have worried — everything went perfectly.

Specific Past Achievement (was/were able to):

✓ Despite the setbacks, they were able to launch on schedule.

✓ I was able to speak to the manager after waiting for an hour.

✓ She was able to resolve the dispute without going to court.

Modal Passive / Had better:

✓ All invoices must be authorised by the finance team.

✓ You'd better double-check those figures before the presentation.

✓ The findings ought to be shared with all stakeholders.

Exercise 7 — Complete the Conversation

1. A: Did you hear? The server crashed. It ____ been mortifying for the team.

✓ must have

2. B: Someone ____ tested the setup properly beforehand.

✓ can't have

3. A: Or they ____ been using an outdated version of the software.

✓ might have

4. B: The whole thing ____ investigated before the next event.

✓ should be

5. A: We ____ not use that venue again without checking their systems first.

✓ 'd better

6. B: Oh — you ____ stayed to help clear up, by the way. But thank you.

✓ needn't have