

# Improve your English for students

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<https://www.alps.academy/improve-english-chinese/>

# Verb Phrases

Alps Academy

## noun phrases

- A noun phrase consists of a noun and its modifiers.
- Modifiers include articles, adjectives, and other elements that provide more information about the noun.
  - **The happy cat**
  - **Two delicious slices of pizza**

last week

## prepositional phrases

- A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition and includes a noun (or pronoun) called the object of the preposition.
- It provides information about the relationship of the noun to the rest of the sentence.
  - **on the table**
  - **under the bridge**

last lesson

## verb phrases

- A verb phrase includes the main verb and its auxiliary (helping) verbs, if any. It represents the action or state of being in a sentence.
  - **Is studying** for the exam
  - **Will have completed** the project

so,

noun phrases have modifiers

verb phrases have helping verbs

verbs

## verbs - what we know

A verb is a word used to express an action, a feeling or a state of being.

- She is riding a bike
- He kicks the ball
- We learn English

<https://www.alps.academy/learn-english-verbs/>

## verb tense - what we know

present simple

I **work** today

past simple

I **worked** yesterday

future simple

I **will work** tomorrow

<https://www.alps.academy/learn-english-verb-tenses/>



## Present

- Present Simple: - I **walk** to the park every day.
- Present Continuous: - I am **walking** to the park right now.
- Present Perfect: - I **have walked** to the park many times.
- Present Perfect Continuous: I **have been walking** to the park for hours.

## Past

- Past Simple: - Yesterday, I **walked** to the park.
- Past Continuous: - While it was raining, I was **walking** to the park.
- Past Perfect: - By the time I arrived, I **had walked** to the park.
- Past Perfect Continuous: - I **had been walking** to the park when it started raining.

## Future

- Future Simple: - Tomorrow, I **will walk** to the park.
- Future Continuous: - At 3 pm tomorrow, I will be **walking** to the park.
- Future Perfect: - By this time next year, I **will have walked** to the park 100 times.
- Future Perfect Continuous: -By the end of the week, I will **have been walking** to the park for seven days straight.

main verbs

## verbs - what we know

- The main verb is the **key action or state of being** in a sentence.
- It expresses **the primary action** that the subject is doing or the state of being that the subject is in.
- It **stands alone as the primary verb** that conveys **the main meaning** of the sentence.

She **runs** every morning.

They **were** happy.

The cat **slept** peacefully

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main verb  
= to walk

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# introduction to verb phrases

## verb phrases

A verb phrase **ends with a verb** and may have other 'helping' verbs before this main verb

the boy **kicks** the ball

- *main verb:* **to kick**
- *helping verb :* **x**

the boy **is kicking** the ball

- *main verb:* **to kick**
- *helping verb:* **is**

## SVO

Sentences in English have a S-V-O structure

subject	verb	object
John	played with	the ball
He	was sleeping in	the bed
A woman	is watching	TV

Subject - is doing something (the verb)

Object - (verb) is doing to this

## sentences

SVO subject - verb - object

(Thai, Chinese & English)

The boy kicked the ball

The boy (S) kicked (V) the ball (O)

nouns - boy, ball      verb - kicked



## Sentence SVO

Subject

The boy

The boy

The boy

The boy

The boy

The boy

Verb

kicked

hit

caught

punched

threw

ran with

Object

the ball

the ball

the ball

the ball

the ball

the ball

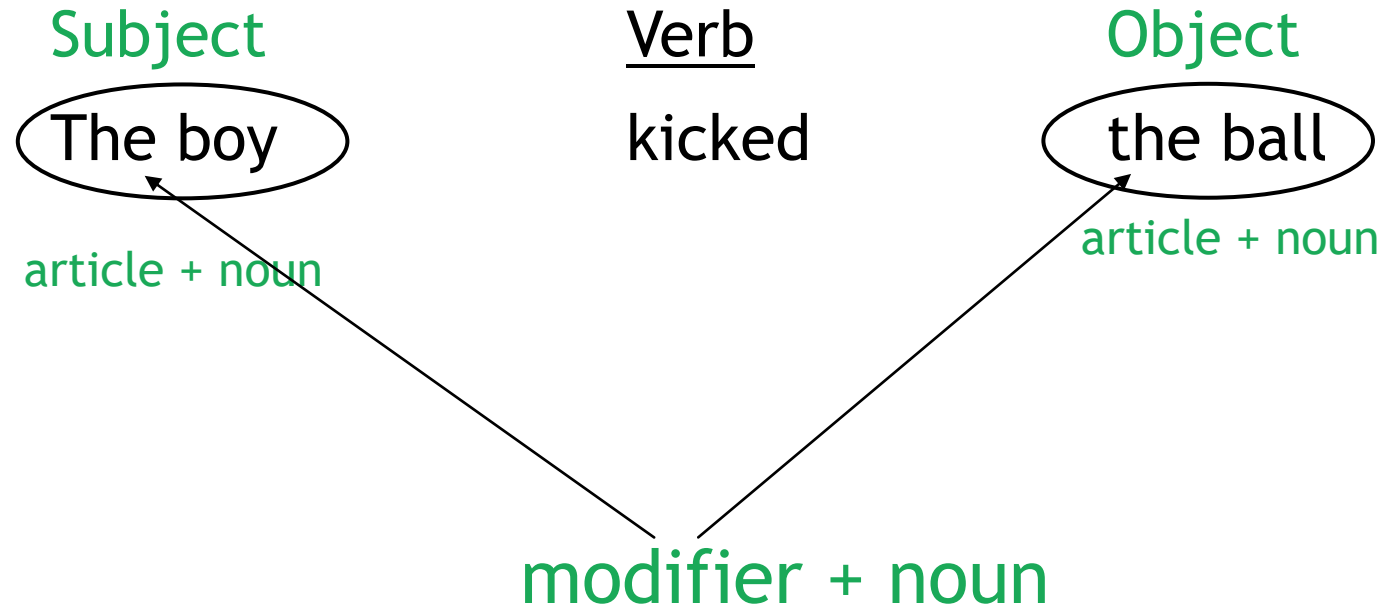
## Sentence SVO

1. The boy **can** kick the ball.
2. The boy **may** kick the ball.
3. The boy **could** kick the ball.
4. The boy **might** kick the ball.
5. The boy **should** kick the ball.
6. The boy **would** kick the ball.
7. The boy **must** kick the ball.

possibility /  
importance



## Sentence SVO



modifier = modifies the noun  
modifies = changes or 'adds to'

## Sentence SVO

Subject  
The boy

Verb

Object  
the ball

**should kick**

helping + main verb

helping verb + main verb

helping verb = 'helps' the verb

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verb phrases

main verb =  
**walk / walking /  
walked**

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- Past Perfect: - By the time I arrived, I **had walked** to the park.
- Past Perfect Continuous: - I had been **walking** to the park when it started raining.

helping verbs =  
am / was  
had / have  
have been  
will / will be  
will have  
will have been

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# helping verbs

## helping verbs

- assist / support the main verb in a sentence
- providing additional information about the action or
  - indicate tense, mood, etc.

## helping verbs

- The cat **had** **slept** peacefully.
  - (The helping verb "**had**" supports the main verb "slept.")
- She **is** **running** every morning.
  - (The helping verb "**is**" is supporting the main verb "running.")
- They **have** **been** **happy**.
  - (The helping verbs "**have**" and "**been**" support the main verb "happy.")



## verb phrases

We have

1. Main verb
2. Helping (auxiliary) verbs
  - some helping verbs are called modal verbs

Helping verbs come before the main verb

Modal verbs come before any helping verbs and the main verb

[modal verb(s)] + [other helping verb(s)] + main verb(s)

## verb phrases

Brave could have walked to school - both helping verbs

“I thought you might could help me.” - multiple modal verbs - not correct English

so, we need to understand

1. modal verbs
2. non-modal verbs that are helping verbs

**modal verbs today**

**other helping verbs next lesson**

# verb phrase exercises

Exercise #1: Read the conversation and choose the helping verbs from the list below to complete each blank.

can    can    haven't    may    must have    should    should

1. A: Hi, I heard you're planning a trip to Paris.

B: Yes, I'm excited! I \_\_\_\_\_ book the flights yet, but I'm thinking of going next month.

2. A: I can't find my keys anywhere.

B: You \_\_\_\_\_ left them in the car. I remember you had them when we parked.

3. A: I have an important job interview tomorrow.

B: You \_\_\_\_\_ wear something professional and be well-prepared. Confidence is key.

4. A: I'm not sure if I \_\_\_\_\_ make it to the party on time.

B: Don't worry. If you're running late, you \_\_\_\_\_ always call and let them know.

5. A: The weather forecast says it \_\_\_\_\_ rain later.

# listening practice

Valerie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vfTHe64HQBO>

Well sometimes I go out by myself  
And I 1 \_\_\_\_\_ across the water  
And I 2 \_\_\_\_\_ of all the things,  
what you're doing  
And in my head I paint a picture  
  
'Cause since I've come on home  
Well my body's 3 \_\_\_\_\_ a mess  
And I've missed your ginger hair  
And the way you like to dress  
Won't you come on over  
Stop 4 \_\_\_\_\_ a fool out of me  
Why don't you come on over, Valerie?

Valerie\*3

put  
been  
have  
look  
changed  
find  
catch  
think  
come  
pay  
making  
missed

Did you 5 \_\_\_\_\_ to go to jail  
6 \_\_\_\_\_ your house on up for sale, did you get  
a good lawyer?  
I hope you didn't 7 \_\_\_\_\_ a tan  
I hope you 8 \_\_\_\_\_ the right man who'll fix it  
for ya  
Are you shopping anywhere  
9 \_\_\_\_\_ the colour of your hair, are you busy?  
And did you have to 10 \_\_\_\_\_ that fine  
That you were dodging all the time, are you still  
dizzy?

Since I've come on home  
Well my body's been a mess  
And I've 11 \_\_\_\_\_ your ginger hair  
And the way you like to dress  
Won't you 12 \_\_\_\_\_ on over?  
Stop making a fool out of me  
Why don't you come on over, Valerie?

Valerie\*3  
repeat

## Valerie

[https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=vfTHe64HQBO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vfTHe64HQBO)

Well sometimes I go out by myself  
And I look across the water  
And I think of all the things, what you're doing  
And in my head I paint a picture

'Cause since I've come on home  
Well my body's been a mess  
And I've missed your ginger hair  
And the way you like to dress  
Won't you come on over  
Stop making a fool out of me  
Why don't you come on over, Valerie?

Valerie\*3

Did you have to go to jail  
Put your house on up for sale, did you get a good  
lawyer?

I hope you didn't catch a tan  
I hope you find the right man who'll fix it for ya  
Are you shopping anywhere  
Changed the colour of your hair, are you busy?  
And did you have to pay that fine  
That you were dodging all the time, are you still dizzy?

Since I've come on home  
Well my body's been a mess  
And I've missed your ginger hair  
And the way you like to dress  
Won't you come on over?  
Stop making a fool out of me  
Why don't you come on over, Valerie?

Valerie\*3  
repeat

# modal verbs



same or different?

Helping verbs are auxiliary verbs

Modal verbs are a type of auxiliary verb

## modal verbs

- can
- could
- may
- might
- shall
- should
- will
- would
- must

## modal verbs

Modal verbs related to the main verb in a sentence to express a speaker's

- attitude
- necessity,
- possibility,
- probability,
- ability,
- permission,
- obligation, or
- requests.

## modal verbs

### Certainty

1. must
2. can't

You **must** be on time

You **can't** be late

## modal verbs

### Probability

1. must She **must** be at home by now
2. might She **might** be at home by now
3. may She **may** be at home by now
4. could She **could** be at home by now
5. can't She **can't** be at home by now

## modal verbs

### Deduction

1. must
2. might
3. can't

He's been studying all night; he **must** be tired

He's been studying all night; he **might** be tired

He's been resting all day; he **can't** be tired

## modal verbs

### Request

1. could
2. would
3. can

**Could** you please pass the salt?

**Would** you please pass the salt?

**Can** you please pass the salt?

## modal verbs

### Permission

1. may      You **may** leave the table when you finish your dinner.
2. can      You **can** go now.
3. can't     You **can't** leave the table until you finish your dinner.
4. must     You **must not** smoke in here
5. can't     You **can't** smoke in here



## modal verbs

### Ability

1. can
2. could

She **can** speak three languages.

She **could** speak three languages by the time she left school

## modal verbs

### Necessity

1. must      You **must** finish your homework before going out.
2. should    You **should** finish your homework before going out.
3. have to    You **have to** finish your homework before going out.
4. ought to   You **ought to** finish your homework before going out.
5. need to    You **need to** finish your homework before going out.

## modal verbs

**Can:** Indicates ability, permission, or possibility.

- I can swim. (ability)
- Can I go to the party? (permission)

**Could:** Similar to "can" but often used for more polite requests or to express a possibility in the past.

- Could you help me, please?

**Will:** Expresses future actions, promises, or willingness.

- I will call you later.

**Would:** Often used to express politeness, make requests, or talk about hypothetical situations.

- Would you like some tea?

**Shall:** Used for suggestions, offers, or to indicate future events in formal English.

- Shall we go for a walk?

## modal verbs

**Should:** Indicates advice, obligation, or expectation.

- You should study for the exam.

**May:** Indicates permission or possibility.

- May I use your phone? (permission)

**Might:** Similar to "may" but often implies a lower probability or is used to express a hypothetical situation.

- It might rain later.

**Must:** Expresses necessity or strong obligation.

- You must finish your homework.

**Ought to:** Similar to "should," expressing obligation or duty.

- You ought to apologize.

# modal verb exercises

Exercise #1: Read the sentences and choose the correct modal verb from the list below to complete each blank.

Modal Verbs: can, could, will, would, should, may, might, must

On Saturday morning, Laura and Tom 1 \_\_\_\_\_ go for a hike in the mountains. Tom 2 \_\_\_\_\_ cook dinner tonight; he enjoys trying new recipes. Laura, you 3 \_\_\_\_\_ bring your camera; we might see some beautiful scenery. They 4 \_\_\_\_\_ start early if they want to reach the summit before sunset. Laura, you 5 \_\_\_\_\_ check the weather forecast before we leave.

Exercise #2: Degree of Certainty. Read the sentences and choose the correct modal verb from the list below to complete each blank.

Modal Verbs: can, could, will, would, should, may, might, must

1. It's 10:30, and Sarah isn't here yet. She \_\_\_\_\_ have forgotten about the meeting.
2. The test is challenging, but if you study hard, you \_\_\_\_\_ pass with flying colours.
3. I heard a noise outside. It \_\_\_\_\_ be the neighbours playing music loudly again.
4. Mark is a very able person; he \_\_\_\_\_ finish the report by himself
5. My parents \_\_\_\_\_ let me go to the concert if I finish my homework early.

Exercise #3: Complete each sentence with a modal verb a, b or c?

1. \_\_\_ you speak any foreign languages?  
a. May      b. Can      c. Have
  
2. Liz \_\_\_ get tired of her job. It is so boring.  
a. has to    b. must      c. should
  
3. Where's Nick? He \_\_\_ be in his office.  
a. might    b. mustn't   c. is to
  
4. Take an umbrella. It \_\_\_ rain later.  
a. has to    b. need      c. might
  
5. Jack \_\_\_ go to hospital yesterday.  
a. must      b. had to    c. need



Exercise #3: Complete each sentence with a modal verb a, b or c?

6. You look tired. You \_\_\_ go to bed.

a. should   b. ought   c. are to

7. You \_\_\_ do it. I've already done it.

a. must not   b. need not   c. ought not

8. \_\_\_ it be true?

a. Must   b. May   c. Can

9. \_\_\_ we stay or leave?

a. Will   b. Would   c. Shall

10. Jane was so tired. She \_\_\_ have worked days and nights.

a. should   b. must   c. need

Exercise #4: Complete each sentence with a modal verb, here are my suggestions:

can't/ mustn't/won't      can      couldn't / didn't      didn't  
should      should      should      shouldn't      shouldn't      shouldn't

1. It was very dark last night. I \_\_\_\_\_ see the man on the road.
2. He's not very strong. He \_\_\_\_\_ try to lift the box.
3. She's singing in the shower. I \_\_\_\_\_ hear her.
4. We must be home by ten o'clock. Perhaps we \_\_\_\_\_ go now.
5. Cigarettes are unhealthy. People \_\_\_\_\_ smoke them.
6. Your face is dirty. You \_\_\_\_\_ wash it.
7. That book doesn't belong to him. He \_\_\_\_\_ take it.
8. Emily's on a diet. She \_\_\_\_\_ eat that cake.
9. When I was young I \_\_\_\_\_ cook at all.
10. The speed limit is 50 km/hr in the city. You \_\_\_\_\_ slow down.

**Thank you!**  
any questions?