

A verb is called an **auxiliary verb** when it is used with another verb carrying the main meaning. The most common auxiliary verbs are **be** and **have**, used in their different forms to show tense.

I *am* walking to school.

The children *have* played all day.

**Do** is used for making questions and negatives.

*Do* you like music?

She *did not* want to go.



Can you pick out the auxiliary verbs in these sentences?

1. **I was looking for Sally.**
2. **He has bought a new CD.**
3. **You don't know what I am talking about.**

## Modal verbs

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An auxiliary verb is called a **modal verb** when it shows the attitude of the speaker or writer, saying what can, should or will happen.

I *must* have something to eat.

You *should* get some rest.

Janet *can* swim very well.

The family *will* visit soon.



Can you pick out the modal verbs in these sentences? What do they tell you about the attitude of the speaker?

1. **I shall leave town tomorrow.**
2. **You must stop annoying your sister.**
3. **I could go home now if I wanted.**

➤ See also **Language Workshop** panels on **Conditionals, Simple, continuous and perfect**, and **Tense**.