Modal Verbs of Obligation

Practice Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Remember: must = strong obligation • have to = necessity/rules • should = advice • mustn't = forbidden • don't have to = not necessary

Exercise 1 — Must, Have to or Should?

Choose the best option. Use the correct form where necessary.

1. You _____ wear a seat belt when you travel by car. (must / should)
2. I _____ get up at six tomorrow because my train leaves early. (have to / should)
3. You look exhausted. You _____ take a break. (must / should)
4. Visitors _____ show their ID before entering the building. (have to / should)
5. We _____ remember to send the application today. It's the final deadline. (must / should)
6. You _____ drink more water if you often get headaches. (should / have to)
7. Employees _____ follow the company's safety rules. (have to / should)
8. I think we _____ apologise for the mistake. (should / have to)

Exercise 2 — Mustn't or Don't Have to?

Complete each sentence with mustn't or don't/doesn't have to.

1. You _____ touch that wire. It's dangerous.
2. You _____ bring any food; we'll provide lunch.
3. Passengers _____ open the doors while the train is moving.
4. Maya _____ come to the meeting if she's busy; it's optional.
5. Students _____ use their phones during the exam.
6. We _____ leave yet. We still have plenty of time.

Exercise 3 — Change the Tense

Complete the sentence with the correct form of have to.

1. When I was at school, I _____ wear a uniform. (past)
2. Next month, we _____ move offices. (future)
3. She _____ work yesterday because the office was closed. (negative past)
4. Do you _____ attend every meeting? (present question)
5. He _____ take the exam again next year. (future)
6. They _____ stay late last night to finish the report. (past)

Exercise 4 — Rewrite the Sentence

Rewrite each sentence using the word in brackets. Keep the meaning as close as possible.

1. It is necessary for everyone to wear a badge. (MUST)
   Everyone _____.
2. It isn't necessary for you to arrive before nine. (HAVE)
   You _____.
3. It is a good idea to back up your files regularly. (SHOULD)
   You _____.
4. Smoking is forbidden in this building. (MUSTN'T)
   You _____.
5. The rules required us to leave our bags outside. (HAD)
   We _____.
6. It would be sensible for him to check the details again. (SHOULD)
   He _____.

Exercise 5 — Find and Correct the Mistake

Each sentence contains one mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. You don't must bring your own laptop; the school provides one.
2. We mustn't pay for parking on Sundays because it's free.
3. Yesterday I must stay at work until ten.
4. She should to speak to her manager.
5. Students don't have to use their phones during the exam; phones are forbidden.

Exercise 6 — What Would You Say?

Write one natural sentence for each situation. Use must, have to, should, mustn't or don't have to.

1. Your friend has an important exam tomorrow but wants to stay out very late.
2. A sign says that photography is forbidden in a museum.
3. Your company requires staff to wear an ID card.
4. A colleague thinks they must attend an optional training session.

Exercise 7 — What Does It Mean?

Choose the best description: strong obligation, advice, prohibition or no necessity.

1. You must submit the form by Friday. _____
2. You shouldn't drive when you're very tired. _____
3. You mustn't enter this area. _____
4. You don't have to book in advance. _____

Answer Key

Exercise 1

1. must 2. have to 3. should 4. have to
5. must 6. should 7. have to 8. should

Exercise 2

1. mustn't 2. don't have to 3. mustn't
4. doesn't have to 5. mustn't 6. don't have to

Exercise 3

1. had to 2. will have to 3. didn't have to
4. have to 5. will have to 6. had to

Exercise 4

1. Everyone must wear a badge.
2. You don't have to arrive before nine.
3. You should back up your files regularly.
4. You mustn't smoke in this building.
5. We had to leave our bags outside.
6. He should check the details again.

Exercise 5

1. You don't have to bring your own laptop; the school provides one.
2. We don't have to pay for parking on Sundays because it's free.
3. Yesterday I had to stay at work until ten.
4. She should speak to her manager.
5. Students mustn't use their phones during the exam; phones are forbidden.

Exercise 6 — Sample answers

1. You should go home and get some sleep.
2. You mustn't take photos in the museum.
3. Staff have to wear an ID card.
4. You don't have to attend the training session.

Exercise 7

1. strong obligation 2. advice 3. prohibition 4. no necessity