



# Modality

(how certain we are about something)

Modality is the selection of words used to express how definite we are about something. It can express from being uncertain (low modality) to very certain (high modality). It is used when we are discussing a point of view.

## Examples giving a point of view:

Regular exercise **may** improve the health of your heart. (low modality)

Regular exercise **will** improve the health of your heart. (high modality)

low modality

high modality

might go → could possibly go → should go → will go → will definitely go

It could be hot outside. → It is probably hot outside. → It is hot outside.

## Modality can be expressed through various language features:

<b>verbs</b>	can, could, have to, must, might, should, would, ought to, couldn't, might not, had better, may, shall, seem, believe, think, appear
<b>adverbs</b>	impossibly, positively, possibly, scarcely, certainly, definitely, most certainly, surely, unquestionably, seriously, apparently, obviously, rarely, occasionally
<b>nouns</b>	chance, opportunity, possibility, necessity, capacity, certainty
<b>adjectives</b>	potential, possible, certain, definite, clear, probable, likely, unlikely, total, essential, absolute, complete