Table of Modals

Present	Past	Use
can (= be able to) **could** (more polite)	**could** (= was able to) **can/could + have + PP** (prob. only)	**ability / possibility / request / permission** **probability** (uncertainty) (~ 50%)
can't **couldn't** (more polite)	**can't + have + PP** **couldn't + have + PP**	**inability / impossibility**
will **would** (more polite)	**will + have + PP** (prob. only)	**request / strong probability** (~100%)
may *(not)* **might** *(not)*	**may** *(not)* **+ have + PP** **might** *(not)* **+ have + PP**	**permission (more polite)** *(im)***probability** (uncertainty) (< 50%)
shall I / shall we Let's / Why don't we + INF. What / How about + -ing	**/**	**suggestion**
must	**had to** **must + have + PP** (prob. only)	**obligation** (speaker feels it's necessary → order) **strong advice** **probability** (deduction) (~90%)
have to **have got to** **need to**	**had to** **had got to** **needed to**	**obligation** (situation makes it necessary) **necessity** **strong advice**
don't have to **don't need to**	**didn't have to** **didn't need to**	**absence of necessity or obligation**
mustn't	**wasn't / weren't allowed to**	**prohibition / interdiction** (speaker prohibits it → order)
can't	**couldn't** **can't + have + PP** (prob. only)	**prohibition / interdiction** (situation prohibits it → impossibility) **improbability** (deduction) (~90%)
should (not)	**should (not) + have + PP**	**advice** **probability** (expectation) (~70-90%)
is/are (not) allowed to	**was(n't) / were(n't) allowed to**	**authorization**