

MODAL VERBS II

MUST HAVE	CAN'T HAVE
MAY HAVE	COULD HAVE
MIGHT HAVE	SHOULD HAVE
NEEDN'T HAVE	OUGHT TO HAVE
DIDN'T NEED TO	

Los verbos modales cuando se utilizan con la forma infinitiva del perfecto ("have" + participio pasado) suelen indicar especulación sobre cosas en el pasado.

Must have

Deducciones lógicas sobre algo del pasado. Basándonos en pruebas llegamos a una conclusión lógica:

The lights are off. They must have gone out.

I never see John and Claire together anymore. They must have separated.

I know you love chocolate. It must have been difficult to say "no" to that piece of cake.

John never called you last night? He must have been working late.

Frank failed the exam. He must not have been paying attention in class.

May have / Might have

Posibilidad en el pasado sin certeza:

I think it may have worked, but we gave up too soon.

They might have won if their star player hadn't been injured.

I don't know, it might have been different if you were there.

Can't have

Similar a "must have", estamos bastante seguros de que algo no puede haber ocurrido o que es imposible en el pasado:

I know you love chocolate. It can't have been easy to say "no" to that piece of cake.

Frank failed the exam. He can't have been paying attention in class.

They had a lot of work to do and little time. They can't have finished everything.

Could have

-Se puede usar en lugar de "can't have":

I know you love chocolate. It couldn't have been easy to say "no" to that piece of cake.

-Alguien tuvo la habilidad o posibilidad de hacer algo en el pasado pero al final no lo hizo:

She could have learned Swahili, but she didn't have time.

If it hadn't stopped raining, the party could have been a disaster.

She could have run faster, but she wanted to save her energy.

We could have bought a new car, but we decided to use the money to go on vacation.

-En afirmativa, parecido a "might have" o "may have", especular sobre la posibilidad en el pasado:

I think it could have worked, but we gave up too soon.

They could have won if their star player hadn't been injured.

I don't know, it could have been different if you were there.

Should have / Ought to have

-Algo no ocurrió, pero habría sido mejor si hubiera ocurrido:

I told you, you should have studied more!

Ben ought to have gone to the doctor sooner. Now they say it will be a month before he is fully recovered.

We should have left earlier. Now we are going to be late.

-En negativa algo sucedió, pero habría sido mejor que no fuese así:

I shouldn't have eaten that last cookie.

She shouldn't have been angry, it wasn't your fault.

Needn't have

Hicimos algo innecesario pero no lo sabíamos en el momento:

I got up very early because I had to look for some exercises. However, the office was locked when I arrived, so I needn't have got up so early.

Didn't need/have to

Hicimos algo innecesario en el pasado pero lo sabíamos:

I didn't need to get so early, so I didn't.