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Do you remember which modal verbs we can use to express [obligation](#)? To talk about obligation, freedom and necessity to do something, we use the verbs '*must*' and '*have to*'.

In negative statements and questions, '***must***' and '***have to***' have special meaning and are used differently.

Remember that modal verbs are always followed by a *base form of a verb* – an [infinitive](#) verb without *to*.

## Negative sentences

### Prohibition

'***Must not***' is a negative obligation, meaning that something *is not allowed*.

We form negative statements with '*must not*' like this:

#### subject + must not + the verb

Singular

Plural

*I must not (mustn't) speak*

*We must not speak*

*You must not speak*

*You must not speak*

*He/she/it must not speak*

*They must not speak*

- *She **must not take** this medicine.*
- *You **mustn't smoke** in the office.*

### No obligation

We use '***don't have to***' to show that there is *no obligation*. You can do something if you want to but it's not compulsory.

The structure is:

**subject + do not / don't / doesn't have to + the verb**

Singular

Plural

*I do not (don't) have to wait*

*We don't have to wait*

*You don't have to wait*

*You don't have to wait*

*He/she/it doesn't have to wait*

*They don't have to wait*

- You **don't have to buy** me a birthday present.
- It's summertime, and Peter **doesn't have to go** to school.

Let's summarize:

**Mustn't = prohibition**  
**Don't have to = it is not necessary**



**You mustn't get up**  
**( prohibition)**



**You don't have to get up**  
**( it is not necessary)**

via <https://pt.slideshare.net/maypulido/mustnt-blog/6>

## Questions

We also use '**have to**' in questions, for example, to ask if something is necessary. Such questions are formed like this:

### **Do / Does + subject + have to + the verb**

Singular

Plural

*Do I have to speak?*

*Do we have to speak?*

*Do you have to speak?*

*Do you have to speak?*

*Does he/she/it have to speak? Do they have to speak?*

- *Do I have to get ready now?*
- *Does she have to leave before 12 a.m.?*

Note: '*Must*' is possible for questions, for example:

- *Must we finish this today?*

But it is not as common as '*have to*'.

Watch this video from Woodward English where you'll learn the difference between '*mustn't*' and '*don't have to*' and can practise these phrases:

Read more on this topic:

[Modal Verbs for Obligations: Statements](#)

[Modal Verbs for Necessity \('Need'\)](#)