

Modal Verb – Should

The modal verb **should** is used to express both **advice** and also **probability or expectation**.

advice – suggestion or recommendation

*If you are driving to London, you **should** avoid rush hour.*

*If you are still feeling ill you **should** see a doctor.*

In these examples the modal verb **should** is placed before the verbs **avoid** and **see** and indicates **advice**. If I say that you **should** avoid rush hour it is only advice, you can ignore me if you want to! Likewise, if you are feeling ill, well, in my opinion you **should** see a doctor but the choice is yours.

probability/expectation – something that is likely to happen

*He **should** pass his driving test with ease because he is an excellent driver.*

*She is feeling better now and **should** be back at work on Monday.*

In these examples we use the modal verb **should** is placed before the verbs **pass** and **be** and indicates **probability and/or expectation**.

If I say that someone **should** pass their driving test, it is based upon my evaluation of that persons' driving skills. It is my **opinion**. I think it is **probable** that the person will pass their driving test because he or she is a good enough driver.

If I say that a person **should** be back to work on Monday, it is an assumption based upon the available evidence or knowledge. So for example, imagine I had bumped into a person on a Saturday and we had a chat. During the chat the person told me that they had been very ill all week but that they were almost completely better. It seems reasonable for me to say that the person **should** be back to work on Monday. It is an expectation or a probability.