

Here are the examples from the listening practice. Notice the form of the infinitive following the modal verb. This is called PERFECT INFINITIVE. For more details, see below.

I **could have got** more out

have got

Goeth **would have bought** this car...

have bought

He **would have given** me...

have given

PERFECT INFINITIVE

HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE

We use the perfect infinitive when we want to speak about the past. For some situations in which we use the modal verbs we cannot use the modal verb in the past or past substitutions (e.g. can – was able to) and we have to use the modal itself and then the past is expressed by the perfect infinitive.

I could stay in our place.

This is for present or future.

You could have stayed with us. Why didn't you stay with us.

This is for the past. We say that there was a possibility to do something in the past, but we didn't do it.

I would buy a car.

This is for present or future.

I would have bought the car.

This is for the past. Again it didn't happen.

I could have got one more person and I didn't .

Back to the example from the video. Schindler says there was a possibility for him to do something but he didn't do it. He regrets.

Examples for other modal verbs

SHOULD

I was late for school in the morning because I missed the bus. **I should have got up earlier.**

The message hidden here is – I didn't get up earlier that is why I missed the bus and was late for school and I regret it now.

I think it was a mistake to buy such an expensive car. **You shouldn't have bought it.**

The message hidden her is – you bought the expensive car and I think it was a mistake. I criticize your decision.

NEEDN'T

They cancelled the meeting but nobody told me about it. **I needn't have come to work so early.**

There wasn't a necessity to do something in the past, but I didn't know about it so I did it and later I found out it wasn't necessary.

X

My boss called me yesterday and told me about the cancelled meeting.

I didn't have to come to work so early today.

There wasn't a necessity to do something in the past, and I knew it so I didn't do it.

MUST

You must get up at five o'clock if you want to catch the train.

You had to get at five o'clock in order to catch the train yesterday.

This is obligation expressed with MUST in the present and in the past we use "have to".

X

You must be really tired after 4 hours on the train. (now)

You must have been really tired after 4 hours on the train. (yesterday)

This is certainty, no obligation. I say I am sure you are tired. In the past we have to use "must". The meaning is I am sure you were tired.

CAN'T

I think it is Jack over there. – **It can't be Jack because he is on holiday.**

Again expressing certainty as with must but it is the opposite. I am sure it isn't Jack.

X

I think I saw Jack yesterday. –

It can't have been Jack because he went on holiday the day before yesterday.

For the past – I am sure it wasn't Jack.

COULD / MAY / MIGHT (real)

That could / may / might have been the doctor who rang earlier while we were out.

Expressing the possibility in the past for real situations we can also use MAY.

COULD / MIGHT (hypothetical)

It's a good thing you went to the doctor or **you could / might have become ill.**

Expressing the possibility in the past but this time it is not a real situation and we cannot use MAY.