

Sentences with two verbs · Modal Verbs vs. Lexical Verbs

Modal Verb + Lexical Verb

(modal + unmarked infinitive)

müssen	<i>have to, need to (must)</i>
mögen	<i>like to, like (+ vb-ing)</i>
können	<i>able to (can)</i>
wollen	<i>want to, intend to</i>
sollen	<i>ought to (should)</i>
dürfen	<i>allowed to (may)</i>

Word order:

The modal verb is in 2nd position, conjugated.

The lexical verb is in last position as an unmarked infinitive.

Forms:

The modal conjugates to the subject.

The lexical verb appears as an infinitive.

Punctuation:

no punctuation (never !!!)

Examples:

Sie will in Potsdam wohnen.

- *She wants to live in Potsdam.*

Er soll einen Brief schreiben.

- *He is supposed to write a letter.*

Lexical Verb₁ + Lexical Verb₂

(verb [non-modal] + dependent infinitive)

scheinen	<i>appear, seem</i>
es macht + dative person + Spaß	<i>be fun</i>
es ist + adverb	<i>it is + adv</i>
(schwer, einfach, schön, etc.)	
finden + adverb	<i>think, find, believe + adv</i>
es gefällt + dative person	<i>like, enjoy, please</i>
haben	<i>have (be in possession of)</i>
usw.	<i>etc.</i>

Word order:

Lexical verb₁ appears in 2nd position.

Lexical verb₂ appears in last position marked with „zu“.

Forms:

Lexical verb₁ conjugates to subject.

Lexical verb₂ appears as an infinitive marked with „zu“.

Punctuation: (comma)

All elements belonging to lexical verb₁ appear before the comma.

All elements belonging to lexical verb₂ appear after the comma.

Examples:

Er scheint, viel Geld zu haben.

- *He appears to have a lot of money.*

Es macht mir Spaß, im Park zu lesen.

- *It's fun to read in the park.*

Exercises:

Render the following into German. Be sure to note whether the verb construction requires:

1) a modal + infinitive or 2) a lexical verb + „zu“ + infinitive

Be sure to place the correct punctuation in each sentence.

1. I want to stay home tonight.
2. He appears to have a big car.
3. It is difficult to read in the library. (Bibliothek - fem)
4. Are you able to go with us to the movies? (mitgehen / ins Kino)
5. We are not allowed to talk during the lecture.
6. (während - genitive / Vorlesung - fem)
7. I find it nice to sleep late on the weekend.
8. (lange schlafen / am Wochenende)
9. We have to start earlier. (anfangen / früher)
10. The weather ought to be better tomorrow.
11. I like going to the movies. (1-modal) (2-lex)
12. Its fun eating out. (im Restaurant essen)
13. I have money to give to you.

Key (don't peek)

Ich will heute abend zu Hause bleiben.
Er scheint, ein großes Auto zu haben.
Es ist schwer, in der Bibliothek zu lesen.
Kannst du mit uns ins Kino (mit)gehen?
Wir dürfen während der Vorlesung nicht sprechen.
Ich finde es schön, am Wochenende lange zu schlafen.
Wir müssen früher anfangen.
Das Wetter soll morgen besser sein.
Ich mag ins Kino gehen. Es gefällt mir ins Kino zu gehen.
Es macht mir Spaß, im Restaurant zu essen.
Ich habe Geld, dir zu geben.