



Unit 19 – Should (*You should practice more..*)



Tom has a toothache. What would you say to Tom?

“You **had better** see a dentist.” ↑ → *stronger suggestion*

“You **ought to** see a dentist.”

“You **should** see a dentist.” ↓ → *weaker suggestion*

A) Should is the most common modal verb of **advice**. → **Should + base verb** (*should + go*)

i) Should – to give advice, or a recommendation/suggestion; to say that it’s the right/wrong thing to do:

- Your hair is getting long. You **should** get a haircut.
- Are you sick? You **should** make an appointment with the doctor.
- You **shouldn’t** be making any noise. Your sister is trying to sleep. (*negative*)
- He **shouldn’t** drive so fast. He could have an accident. (*negative*)

ii) Ought to – ‘ought to’ can also be used for advice, but it is more formal and not used very often.

iii) Had better – ‘had better’ is a stronger form of advice because there could be consequences as a result:

- It’s getting late. **I’d better** go now or I’ll miss my bus.
- **Me:** Should we take an umbrella? **You:** Yes, **we’d better** take one. It might rain later.
- **Me:** Are you going to buy the shoes? **You:** **I’d better** not. They’re too expensive!

Tip: → ‘I + had’ better sounds formal. We usually say *I’d better, we’d better, etc.* in spoken English.

Tip: → We often express ‘should + think’ together:

- I **think we should** stop for gas. The tank is almost empty.
- Do you **think that we should** leave now?

B) Other forms of should:

i) Probability – a situation that is likely (in the present):

- Ted **should** be at the office now. Try to call him.
- Jess **should** have the package now. I sent it to her last week.

ii) Prediction – a situation that is likely (in the future):

- Boston **should** win this game. They’re leading by 15 points.
- Justin **should** pass the exam easily. He’s a good student.

iii) Obligation – sometimes we express ‘should’ instead of ‘have to’ or ‘must’:

- I **should** arrive to work 10 minutes earlier tomorrow morning.
- You **should** never cheat on tests.

iv) Regret/mistakes – when someone did not act responsibly or perform their duties (*should + have + p.p. verb*):

- We **should have left** earlier. We might miss the start of the movie!
- I’m so tired today. I **shouldn’t have gone** to bed so late last night.

v) Not fulfilling obligations/duties – when someone is not doing what they should be (*should + be + verb-ing*):

- You **should be studying**. Not playing video games!
- He **should be wearing** his seatbelt. That’s dangerous.



Unit 19 – Exercises:

19.1 – Using the words in brackets, write a sentence in response to each problem or issue.

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|---|---|
| 1. John has an exam next week. (should/study) | 1. John should study every day for the exam. |
| 2. I have a really bad cold today. (should/take) | 2. _____. |
| 3. My class is at the same time as the movie. (shouldn't/go) | 3. _____. |
| 4. She forgets her appointments a lot. (ought to/write) | 4. _____. |
| 5. Amy forgot to submit the project on time. (had better/apologize) | 5. _____. |
| 6. We need to plan our vacation. (should/research) | 6. _____. |
| 7. They aren't sure where the bank is. (should/ask) | 7. _____. |
| 8. My best friend needs summer clothes. (should/go) | 8. _____. |
| 9. Brian hasn't finished his homework. (shouldn't/go out) | 9. _____. |
| 10. It's my mom's birthday tomorrow. (should/call) | 10. _____. |

19.2 – Complete the sentences with **should** or **should have** and the verbs in brackets.

- We took a wrong turn and got lost in the city. We **should have followed** the GPS carefully. (follow)
- When does Dan get here? **Me:** I'm not sure but he _____ soon. (arrive)
- Joe has a chess match today. He _____. He's a great player. (win)
- I can't believe we lost that game! We _____! We're a much better team. (win)
- Kelly didn't take my advice and now her boss is upset. She _____ to me. (listen)
- I'm really not sure what decision to make. What do you think I _____? (do)
- The traffic jam was terrible today. I _____ work earlier to avoid it. (leave)
- You missed a lovely party last night! You _____ to say hello. (come)

19.3 – Complete the sentences with **should** or **shouldn't**. Some sentences are in the past tense.

- Today I checked my phone while driving and almost had an accident.
You shouldn't have checked your phone while driving. That's risky.
- My boss got angry with me for not doing the report. Actually, that is my co-worker's task. Not mine.
My boss _____.
- Kevin is riding his bike way too fast and he's not wearing a helmet.
Kevin _____.
- I told Sarah the password to the file but she didn't write it down. Now she can't open the file.
Sarah _____.
- The sign says the store is open '24 hours a day/7 days a week' but it's actually closed today.
_____.

19.4 – Write an appropriate response to each statement using **should**.

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|--|-----------|
| 1. Carol doesn't eat well, sleep well or take vitamins. | 1. _____. |
| 2. You mailed the package three weeks ago to your friend. | 2. _____. |
| 3. Your team is winning the game by 28 points at halftime. | 3. _____. |
| 4. Jennifer is not wearing her seatbelt in the car. | 4. _____. |
| 5. You start work at 9am. What time should you arrive? | 5. _____. |

19.5 – What are some things you should do in the future? What about in the past? Complete the sentences.

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|----------------------------|-----------|
| 1. should / tomorrow | 1. _____. |
| 2. should / these days | 2. _____. |
| 3. should / past (p.p.) | 3. _____. |
| 4. shouldn't / past (p.p.) | 4. _____. |