

Intermediate 2
Unit 2 Grammar Part B
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Changes of Modal Verbs in Reported Speech

Modal Verbs with Change	
will	would
can	could
may	might
must	had to

Modal Verbs without Change	
mustn't	mustn't
should	should
ought to	ought to
might	might
would	would

Tom said, "I **will** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **would** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **can** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **could** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **may** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **might** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **must** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **had to** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **mustn't** fail the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **mustn't** fail the final exam.

Tom said, "I **should** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **should** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **ought to** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **ought to** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **might** pass the final exam."
Tom said (that) he **might** pass the final exam.

Tom said, "I **would** like to drink coffee."
Tom said (that) he **would** like to drink coffee.

Point:

When the tense of the reporting verb (say, tell, ...) is the simple past tense, some modal verbs undergo changes, but if the tense of the reporting verb is the simple present tense, modal verbs don't change at all.

Examples:

Mary says, "I will find a solution to the problem."

Mary says (that) she will find a solution to the problem.

- **The Reporting Verb:** says (Simple Present Tense)
- The modal verb "will" doesn't change.

Angela said, "I will work on the project for two more days."

Angela said (that) she would work on the project for two more days.

- **The Reporting Verb:** said (Simple Past Tense)
- The modal verb "will" changes into "would".

Source:

[Intermediate 2 \(anglophone.ir\)](http://anglophone.ir)