

Should 1

A

You **should** do something = it is a good thing to do or the right thing to do. You can use **should** to give advice or to give an opinion:

- You look tired. You **should** go to bed.
- The government **should** do more to reduce crime.
- 'Should we invite Susan to the party?' 'Yes, I think we **should**.'

We often use **should** with **I think / I don't think / Do you think ... ?**:

- I **think** the government **should** do more to reduce crime.
- I **don't think** you **should** work so hard.
- 'Do you think I **should** apply for this job?' 'Yes, I think you **should**.'

You **shouldn't** do something = it isn't a good thing to do:

- You **shouldn't** believe everything you read in the newspapers.

Should is not as strong as **must** or **have to**:

- You **should** apologise. (= it would be a good thing to do)
- You **must** apologise. / You **have to** apologise. (= you have no alternative)

B

You can use **should** when something is not right or what you expect:

- I wonder where Tina is. She **should be** here by now.
(= she isn't here yet, and this is not normal)
- The price on this packet is wrong. It **should be** £2.50,
not £3.50.
- That man on the motorbike **should be** wearing a helmet.



We also use **should** to say that we expect something to happen:

- She's been studying hard for the exam, so she **should pass**. (= I expect her to pass)
- There are plenty of hotels in the town. It **shouldn't be** difficult to find somewhere to stay.
(= I don't expect it to be difficult)

C

You **should have done** something = you didn't do it, but it would have been the right thing to do:

- You missed a great party last night. You **should have come**. Why didn't you?
(= you didn't come, but it would have been good to come)
- I wonder why they're so late. They **should have arrived** long ago.

You **shouldn't have done** something = you did it, but it was the wrong thing to do:

- I'm feeling sick. I **shouldn't have eaten** so much. (= I ate too much)
- She **shouldn't have been listening** to our conversation. It was private.
(= she was listening)

Compare **should (do)** and **should have (done)**:

- You look tired. You **should go** to bed now.
- You went to bed very late last night. You **should have gone** to bed earlier.

D

Ought to ...

You can use **ought to** instead of **should** in the sentences on this page. We say 'ought to do' (with to):

- Do you think I **ought to** apply for this job? (= Do you think I **should** apply ... ?)
- Jack **ought not to go** to bed so late. (= Jack **shouldn't go** ...)
- It was a great party last night. You **ought to have come**.
- She's been studying hard for the exam, so she **ought to pass**.

Exercises

Unit 33

should

33.1 For each situation, write a sentence with **should** or **shouldn't** + the following:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| go away for a few days | go to bed so late | look for another job |
| put some pictures on the walls | take a photograph | use her car so much |

- 1 Liz needs a change. She should go away for a few days.
- 2 Your salary is very low. You
- 3 Jack always has difficulty getting up. He
- 4 What a beautiful view! You
- 5 Sue drives everywhere. She never walks. She
- 6 Bill's room isn't very interesting.

33.2 Read the situations and write sentences with **I think/I don't think ... should ...**

- 1 Peter and Cathy are planning to get married. You think it's a bad idea.
I don't think they should get married.
- 2 Jane has a bad cold but plans to go out this evening. You don't think this is a good idea. You say to her:
- 3 Peter needs a job. He's just seen an advertisement for a job which you think would be ideal for him, but he's not sure whether to apply or not. You say to him:
I think
- 4 The government wants to increase taxes, but you don't think this is a good idea.
.....

33.3 Complete the sentences with **should (have) + the verb in brackets**.

- 1 Diane should pass the exam. She's been studying very hard. (pass)
- 2 You missed a great party last night. You should have come. (come)
- 3 We don't see you enough. You and see us more often. (come)
- 4 I'm in a difficult position. What do you think I ? (do)
- 5 I'm sorry that I didn't take your advice. I what you said. (do)
- 6 I'm playing tennis with Jane tomorrow. She - she's much better than me. (win)
- 7 We lost the match, but we We were the better team. (win)
- 8 'Is Mike here yet?' 'Not yet, but he here soon.' (be)
- 9 I posted the letter three days ago, so it by now. (arrive)

33.4 Read the situations and write sentences with **should/shouldn't**. Some of the sentences are past and some are present.

- 1 I'm feeling sick. I ate too much. I shouldn't have eaten so much.
- 2 That man on the motorbike isn't wearing a helmet. That's dangerous.
He should be wearing a helmet.
- 3 When we got to the restaurant, there were no free tables. We hadn't reserved one.
We
- 4 The notice says that the shop is open every day from 8.30. It is 9 o'clock now, but the shop isn't open yet.
- 5 The speed limit is 30 miles an hour, but Kate is doing 50.
She
- 6 Laura gave me her address, but I didn't write it down. Now I can't remember it.
I
- 7 I was driving behind another car. Suddenly, the driver in front stopped without warning and I drove into the back of his car. It wasn't my fault.
The driver in front
- 8 I walked into a wall. I was looking behind me. I wasn't looking where I was going.
.....

say.

do: