Modals of ADVICE

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should

Good idea, expectation

You **should** eat more sensibly to stay healthy

should not

Bad idea, not recommended

You **shouldn't** smoke so much. Try to quit.

ought to

Formal, and serious

You **ought to** finish this on time if you want a promotion.

ought not to

Formal, and serious

You **ought not to** be late for your job interview.

had better

Strong advice, possible consequence

You'**d better** hurry, or you'll miss your train.

had better not

Strong advice, possible consequence

You'**d better not** forget what you promised me, young man!

could

Polite and tentative

You **could** try a different approach to solve this.

Think of 'had better' as a warning or a threat