

Modal verbs: must, may, might, could, can't

1. Fill in the gaps with must, may, might, could or can't.

a) I'm sure he is here - I can see his car in front of the building.

He be here. I can see his car in front of the building.

b) I'm not sure I'm going to pass the exam. I don't feel very confident.

I pass the exam. I don't feel very confident.

c) I'm sure she doesn't speak French very well - she's only lived in Paris for a few weeks.

She speak French very well. She's only lived in Paris for a few weeks.

d) My key's not in my pocket or on my desk so I'm sure it's in the drawer.

My key's not in my pocket or on my desk so it be in the drawer.

e) Someone told me that Mark was in Mexico but I saw him yesterday so I'm sure he's not abroad.

Mark be abroad.

f) You got the job? That's great. I'm sure you're delighted.

You got the job? That's great. You be delighted.

2. Fill in the gaps with must, may, might, could or can't.

a) Anna's got two cars. She earn a lot of money.

b) I don't know if Tony's dad is a pilot. It be true.

c) They've got 4 dogs and 3 cats. They have a very big house.

d) Tom: "Jon's ill." Peter: "I saw him at the gym - he be ill."

e) Stay in bed today. You have flu.

- f) It be time to leave already.
- g) I think the library is somewhere here - or it be in the town centre.
- h) Is there no nightlife in your town? It be very boring!
- i) That be the Rolling Stones! It's a woman singing.
- j) You've driven 300km today?! You be really tired.
- k) They're coming this week but I don't know which day. They
be coming tomorrow.
- l) I've bought a lottery ticket. There's a chance I'll become a millionaire!
I become a millionaire!
- m) I asked them to send the goods as soon as possible; we
receive them by the end of the week if the post is fast.
- n) They told me to prepare the project by tomorrow but it's almost impossible to have
it done so fast. I finish it by tomorrow if I stay at work all
night, but I'm not sure.

3. Rewrite the sentences using the modal verbs.

- ▶ Mark is thinking about going snowboarding. (might)

Mark might go snowboarding.

- a) It's possible that Jane will visit Switzerland next year. (could)

.....

- b) I'm thinking about taking Spanish lessons. (may)

.....

- c) I'm sure they'll be home by now. (must)

.....

d) James definitely isn't eighteen yet! (can't)

.....

e) It's possible the weather will be sunny tomorrow. (might)

.....

4. Read the story. Then rewrite the sentences using the modal verbs.

Mr Smith was an ordinary man. Every day he went to work at nine o'clock and came back at half past five. Mr Smith was married to Mrs Smith. One day Mrs Smith disappeared. The next day Mr Smith started planting flowers in his garden. He continued to go to work as usual. Then one day he didn't go to work. He left the house at ten o'clock, and came back at two o'clock driving a new car. The next day Mr Smith moved out. I never saw him again.

► There's a possibility that he argued with his wife. (might)

He might have argued with his wife.

f) I'm sure that Mrs Smith didn't leave home. (can't)

Mrs Smith

g) Perhaps she's gone to stay with her mother. (might)

She

h) It's possible that Mr Smith committed a crime. (may)

Mr Smith

i) I'm certain that he buried something in the garden. (must)

He

j) Perhaps he won the lottery. (could)

He

k) I'm sure he bought a new car. (must)

He

l) Perhaps Mr Smith murdered his wife. (might)

Mr Smith

KEY - Modal verbs: must, may, might, could, can't

1. Fill in the gaps with must, may, might, could or can't.

- a) He **must** be here. I can see his car in front of the building.
- b) I **may not / might not** pass the exam. I don't feel very confident.
- c) She **can't** speak French very well. She's only lived in Paris for a few weeks.
- d) My key's not in my pocket or on my desk so it **must** be in the drawer.
- e) Mark **can't** be abroad.
- f) You got the job? That's great. You **must** be delighted.

2. Fill in the gaps with must, may, might, could or can't.

- a) Anna's got two cars. She **must** earn a lot of money.
- b) I don't know if Tony's dad is a pilot. It **could/may/might** be true.
- c) They've got 4 dogs and 3 cats. They **must** have a very big house.
- d) Tom: "Jon's ill." Peter: "I saw him at the gym - he **can't** be ill."
- e) Stay in bed today. You **could/may/might** have flu.
- f) It **can't** be time to leave already.
- g) I think the library is somewhere here - or it **could/may/might** be in the town centre.
- h) Is there no nightlife in your town? It **must** be very boring!
- i) That **can't** be the Rolling Stones! It's a woman singing.
- j) You've driven 300km today?! You **must** be really tired.
- k) They're coming this week but I don't know which day. They **could/may/might** be coming tomorrow.
- l) I've bought a lottery ticket. There's a chance I'll become a millionaire!
I **could/may/might** become a millionaire!

m) I asked them to send the goods as soon as possible; we **could/may/might** receive them by the end of the week if the post is fast.

n) They told me to prepare the project by tomorrow but it's almost impossible to have it done so fast. I **could/may/might** finish it by tomorrow if I stay at work all night, but I'm not sure.

3. Rewrite the sentences using the modal verbs.

a) It's possible that Jane will visit Switzerland next year. (could)

Jane could visit Switzerland next year.

b) I'm thinking about taking Spanish lessons. (may)

I may take Spanish lessons.

c) I'm sure they'll be home by now. (must)

They must be home by now.

d) James definitely isn't eighteen yet! (can't)

James can't be eighteen yet!

e) It's possible the weather will be sunny tomorrow. (might)

The weather might be sunny tomorrow.

4. Read the story. Then rewrite the sentences using the modal verbs.

a) Mrs Smith ***can't have left home.***

b) She ***might have gone to stay with her mother.***

c) Mr Smith ***may have committed a crime.***

d) He ***must have buried something in the garden.***

e) He ***could have won the lottery.***

f) He ***must have bought a new car.***

g) Mr Smith ***might have murdered his wife.***