



MODALS OF POSSIBILITY & DEDUCTION

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1. Look at the evidence

Read the situation. Choose the best sentence.

A - The lights are on and there are cars outside.

- a) They can't be home.
- b) They must be home.
- c) They might not be home.

B - It's 2 a.m. and the office is completely dark.

- a) Everyone must be working.
- b) Everyone might be working.
- c) Everyone can't be working.

C - Maria isn't answering her phone. It's Saturday afternoon.

- a) She might be busy.
- b) She must be at work.
- c) She can't be busy.

D - Tom has a suitcase and a passport.

- a) He must be travelling.
- b) He can't be travelling.
- c) He might not be travelling.

3. Correct the mistakes

Each sentence has **one mistake**.

1. She must to be tired.

2. He might is at home.

3. They can't be to work.

4. It could rains tomorrow.

5. She must be working yesterday.

6. He might not be home now.

2. What do you think?

Use must, might, could, or can't.

1. Your friend has sunglasses, a towel and a swimsuit.
They _____ going to the beach.
2. Your neighbour has lots of boxes.
She _____ moving house.
3. Your colleague looks tired and has a coffee in his hand.
He _____ be tired.
4. Your friend is wearing a very smart suit.
He _____ have an important meeting.
5. There is nobody at home and all the lights are off.
They _____ be home.

4. Present or past?

We can also use these forms to make deductions about the past.

Present: She must be working.

Past: She must have been working.

Present: He might be sleeping.

Past: He might have been sleeping.

Complete the sentences.

1. The car isn't here. They might _____ (go) out.
2. John didn't answer the phone. He might _____ (sleep).
3. Sarah looks exhausted. She must _____ (work) all night.
4. I don't know where Tom went. He could _____ (go) home.
5. The ground is wet. It must _____ (rain).

REAL ENGLISH BOX

When talking about the past, these are useful:

He might have...

- "He might have forgotten."

She could have...

- "She could have missed the bus."

They must have...

- "They must have left already."

He can't have...

- "He can't have seen my message."

5. Mini Detective

Your partner chooses one situation.

Situation A - Someone didn't come to work.

Situation B - Someone didn't answer the phone.

Situation C - Someone arrived very late.

Situation D - Someone suddenly left a party.

Give three possible explanations.

Example:

- "She might have missed the bus."
- "She could have forgotten the time."
- "She might have had a problem."

Your partner asks: "Which explanation do you think is most likely?"

Teacher's Key

1. Look at the evidence

- A – b
- B – c
- C – a
- D – a

2. What do you think?

- 1. must be
- 2. might/could be
- 3. must be
- 4. might/could/must be
- 5. can't be

3. Correct the mistakes

- 1. She must **be** tired.
- 2. He might **be** at home.
- 3. They can't **be** at work.
- 4. It could **rain** tomorrow.
- 5. She must have been working yesterday.
- 6. Correct as written.

4. Present or past?

- 1. have gone
- 2. have been sleeping / have been asleep
- 3. have been working
- 4. have gone
- 5. have rained