

modals of deduction: *might, can't, must***might** (when you think something is possibly true)

Tony's phone is switched off. He **might** be on the plane now, or just boarding. **6.11**
 Laura **might not** like that skirt. It's not really her style.

can't (when you are sure something is impossible / not true)

Nigel **can't** earn much money in his job. He's still living with his parents. **6.12**
 That woman **can't** be Jack's wife. Jack's wife has dark hair.

must (when you are sure something is true)

The neighbours **must** be out. There aren't any lights on in the house. **6.13**
 Your sister **must** have a lot of money if she drives a Porsche.



- We often use *might, can't, or must* to say how sure or certain we are about something (based on the information we have).
- In this context, the opposite of *must* is *can't*. Compare:
The neighbours must be out. There aren't any lights on in the house.
The neighbours can't be out. All the lights are on in the house. NOT The neighbours mustn't be out.
- We can use *may* instead of *might* and we can use *could* in positive sentences.
Jack could (or may) be at the party – I'm not sure.
- We don't use *can* instead of *might / may*. **NOT** ~~He can be on the plane now.~~
- We often use *be + gerund* after *might / must / can't*.
They must be having a party – the music's very loud.



a Match the sentences.

- He might be American. **D**
- He can't be a university student.
 - He must be cold.
 - He might be going to the gym.
 - He could be lost.
 - He must be married.
 - He must be a tourist.
 - He can't be enjoying the party.
 - He may not have a job.
 - He can't be a businessman.
- A He's carrying a sports bag.
 B He's carrying a camera and a guide book.
 C He's looking at a map.
 D He's wearing a baseball cap.
 E He's looking at job adverts in the newspaper.
 F He isn't talking to anybody.
 G He isn't wearing a suit.
 H He's wearing a wedding ring.
 I He's wearing school uniform.
 J It's freezing and he isn't wearing a jumper.

b Complete with *must, might (not), or can't*.

- A What does Pete's new girlfriend do?
 B I'm not sure, but she **might** be a doctor. I think she works at the hospital.
- A Do you know anyone who drives a Ferrari?
 B Yes, my nephew. I don't know his salary, but he _____ earn a fortune!
- A Why don't you buy this dress for your mum?
 B I'm not sure. She _____ like it. It's a bit short for her.
- A My sister works as an interpreter for the EU.
 B She _____ speak a lot of languages to work there.
- A Did you know that Andy's parents have split up?
 B Poor Andy. He _____ be very happy about that.
- A Are your neighbours away? All the curtains are closed.
 B I'm not sure. I suppose they _____ be on holiday.
- A Where's your colleague today?
 B She _____ be ill. She called to say that she was going to the doctor's.
- A I'm looking forward to seeing Jane! I haven't seen her for years.
 B You _____ recognize her – she's lost a lot of weight.
- A My daughter has failed all her exams again.
 B She _____ be working very hard.
- A Why is Tina so happy?
 B I'm not sure, but she _____ have a new partner.
- A Where does your boss live?
 B I don't know, but he _____ live near the office because he commutes every day by train.