

Modal Verbs of Speculation

Speculating is saying ideas about things you don't have proof for but which you have varying levels of confidence about, depending on evidence you have.

	Modals	Present Example
Possible	might / may + verb	Alain might <u>be</u> at home.
Possible (negative)	might / may not + verb	He might <u>not be</u> at home. Evidence: - Sometimes he goes for a run between 09:00 and 10:00.
Sure	must + verb	Alain must <u>be</u> at home. Evidence: - His car is outside his house. - He told me last night he was staying in all day on Friday.
Sure (negative)	mustn't / can't + verb	Alain can't <u>be</u> at home. He's getting married today!

	Modals	Past Example
Possible	might / may + have + pp	Where was Alain last night? He might have been at home. Where is Alain? He might <u>have gone</u> to the shop. (he left 30 minutes ago) Evidence: - he is not at home - he said he wasn't going anywhere special
Possible (negative)	might / may not + have + pp	Mary: John is in hospital. Peter: He must <u>have had</u> a heart attack. Evidence: - he is overweight and has high cholesterol Mary: He might <u>not have had</u> a heart attack. Evidence: - he has gout- that might be the problem -

<p>Sure</p>	<p>must + have + pp</p>	<p>Alain must <u>have been</u> to the shop.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is milk in the fridge, an unopened bar of chocolate on the table, and some new flowers on the window sill. - Alain is the only person in the house <p>Reality: Actually, my mum came with some goodies and dropped them off while I was in the shower.</p>
<p>Sure (negative)</p>	<p>must not + have + pp</p>	<p>John isn't here at the school reunion.</p> <p>He must <u>have forgotten</u> about the event. He must <u>not have received</u> his invitation.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - he loved school - he said he would if he was asked

Exercise 1

Fill the gaps in the sentences:

- 1) Where is my phone? Oh dang. I in the car!
- 2) Was the soup ok when we left? Iit. There were flies in the room!
- 3) A biopsy is needed, Mrs Johnson because thereulcer in your stomach.
- 4) I hear Mary got a promotion? She happy!
- 5) The house is freezing. We the heating timer on before we left.

Exercise 2

Write sentences using modal verbs of speculation:

1)

A: Where is John? He never misses a match.

B: I saw him with a suitcase the other day.

2)

A: I haven't seen Billy in the Orthopaedic department for a while.

B: He went for a job interview in Obstetrics.

3)

A: Switch the TV on - Boris Johnson is having a terrible 48 hours.

B: Normally Prime Ministers don't survive this kind of thing.

4)

A: That man is being stopped at the door.

B: The security guards said he looks too young.

Answers

Exercise 1

Fill the gaps in the sentences:

1) Where is my phone? Oh dang. I **must have left it** in the car!

2) Was the soup ok when we left? I **might not have covered** it. There were flies in the room!

3) A biopsy is needed, Mrs Johnson because there **might be** an ulcer in your stomach.

- 4) I hear Mary got a promotion? She **must be** happy!
- 5) The house is freezing. We **must not have** switched the heating timer on before we left.

Exercise 2

Write sentences using modal verbs of speculation:

1)

A: Where is John? He never misses a match.

B: I saw him with a suitcase the other day.

- He must be on holiday.
- He must have gone on holiday.

2)

A: I haven't seen Billy in the Orthopaedic department for a while.

B: He went for a job interview in Obstetrics.

He must have got the job!

He might have been successful in the interview process.

3)

A: Switch the TV on - Boris Johnson is having a terrible 48 hours.

B: Normally Prime Ministers don't survive this kind of thing.

He might resign.

He might have resigned already!

4)

A: That man is being stopped at the door.

B: The security guards said he looks too young.

He might be underage.

He must have forgotten his ID.

He might not have any photo ID.

He might not be allowed to enter.