

Unit 30: MAY AND MIGHT

May and **might** are modal verbs. Unit 27 shows you how to make correct sentences with them. This unit shows you when to use them.

1 Possibility

- a NOW** **EXAMPLES:** I don't know where John is but he **might be** helping Peter.
 NOTICE: The Canadian winter **may be** very cold. = this winter
 BUT: The Canadian winter **can be** very cold. = generally
- b FUTURE** **EXAMPLES:** Gas prices **might fall** again soon.
 NOTICE: also **may**
- c PAST** **EXAMPLES:** I think you **may have caught** a cold.
 NOTICE: also **might**; also **could** (Unit 29)

2 Permission

- a STATEMENT** **EXAMPLES:** Visitors **may enter** the museum from 9:00 to 5:00 each day.
- b REQUEST** **EXAMPLES:** **May I come in?**
 May we think about it for a few days?
 NOTICE: **may** only; do NOT use *might*
 NOTICE: more polite than **can** (Unit 28) or **could** (Unit 29)

3 Might with past tense

We use **might** (NOT **may**) in sentences with a past tense verb before the modal (Unit 63.8).

- EXAMPLES:** I **thought** the road **might be** blocked so I went another way.
 He **told** me that the next winter in Canada **might be** very cold.