

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 a customer.
- NOTICE:** The stores **may be** very busy. = today
- BUT:** The stores **can be** very busy. = generally
- b FUTURE**
- EXAMPLES:** Clothing prices **might fall** again soon.
- NOTICE:** also **may**
- c PAST**
- EXAMPLES:** I think you **may have got** a good deal.
- NOTICE:** also **might**; also **could** (Unit 29)

2 Permission

- a STATEMENT**
- EXAMPLES:** Customers **may enter** the store 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).

- EXAMPLES:** I **thought** the store **might be** busy so I went a different one.
- He **told** me that the next sale at the store **might be** very big.