

May and might 2

A

We use **may** and **might** to talk about possible actions or happenings in the future:

- ☐ I haven't decided yet where to go on holiday. I **may go** to Ireland. (= perhaps I will go there)
- ☐ Take an umbrella with you. It **might rain** later. (= perhaps it will rain)
- ☐ The bus isn't always on time. We **might have** to wait a few minutes. (= perhaps we will have to wait)

The negative forms are **may not** and **might not (mightn't)**:

- ☐ Amy **may not go** out tonight. She isn't feeling well. (= perhaps she will not go out)
- ☐ There **might not be** enough time to discuss everything at the meeting. (= perhaps there will not be enough time)

Compare **will** and **may/might**:

- ☐ I'll be late this evening. (for sure)
- ☐ I **may/might** be late this evening. (possible)

B

Usually you can use **may** or **might**. So you can say:

- ☐ I **may go** to Ireland. or I **might go** to Ireland.
- ☐ Jane **might be** able to help you. or Jane **may be** able to help you.

But we use only **might (not may)** when the situation is *not real*:

- ☐ If they paid me better, I **might** work harder. (*not* I may work)

The situation here is not real because they do *not* pay me well, so I'm not going to work harder.

C

There is a continuous form: **may/might be -ing**. Compare this with **will be -ing**:

- ☐ Don't phone at 8.30. I'll **be watching** the football on television.
- ☐ Don't phone at 8.30. I **might be watching** (or I **may be watching**) the football on TV. (= perhaps I'll be watching it)

We also use **may/might be -ing** for possible plans. Compare:

- ☐ I'm **going** to Ireland in July. (for sure)
- ☐ I **might be going** (or I **may be going**) to Ireland soon. (possible)

But you can also say 'I **might go** / I **may go** ...' with little difference in meaning.

D

Might as well

Helen and Clare have just missed the bus. The buses run every hour.

What shall we do? Shall we walk?

We **might as well**. It's a nice day and I don't want to wait here for an hour.

We **might as well** do something = We should do it because there is no better alternative. There is no reason not to do it.

May as well is also possible.



- ☐ A: What time are you going out?
- ☐ B: Well, I'm ready, so I **might as well go** now.
- ☐ Buses are so expensive these days, you **might as well get** a taxi. (= taxis are as good, no more expensive)

30.1 Write sentences with **might**.

- Where are you going for your holidays? (to Ireland???)
I haven't decided yet. I might go to Ireland.
- What sort of car are you going to buy? (a Honda???)
I'm not sure yet. I
- When is Tom coming to see us? (on Saturday???)
He hasn't said yet.
- Where are you going to hang that picture? (in the dining room???)
I haven't made up my mind yet.
- What is Tanya going to do when she leaves school? (go to university???)
She's still thinking about it.

30.2 Complete the sentences using **might** + the following:

bite break need ~~rain~~ slip wake

- Take an umbrella with you when you go out. It might rain later.
- Don't make too much noise. You the baby.
- Be careful of that dog. It you.
- Don't throw that letter away. We it later.
- Be careful. The footpath is very icy. You
- Don't let the children play in this room. They something.

30.3 Complete the sentences. Use **might be able to** or **might have to** + one of the following:

fix help leave meet sell work

- Tell me about your problem. I might be able to help you.
- I'm not free this evening, but I you tomorrow.
- I don't know if I'll be free on Sunday. I
- I can come to the meeting, but I before the end.
- I'm short of money. I want to keep my car, but I it.
- A: There's something wrong with my bike.
B: Let me have a look. I it.

30.4 Write sentences with **might not**.

- I'm not sure that Liz will come to the party.
Liz might not come to the party.
- I'm not sure that I'll go out this evening.
I
- I'm not sure that we'll be able to get tickets for the game.
We
- I'm not sure that Sam will be able to go out with us tonight.
.....

30.5 Read the situations and make sentences with **might as well**.

- You and a friend have just missed the bus. The buses run every hour.
You say: We'll have to wait an hour for the next bus. We might as well walk.
- You've been invited to a party. You're not very excited about it, but you decide to go.
You say: I'm not doing anything else, so I to the party.
- You've just painted your kitchen. You still have a lot of paint, so why not paint the bathroom too?
You say: We There's plenty of paint left.
- You and a friend are at home. You're bored. There's a film on TV starting in a few minutes.
You say: There's nothing else to do.