

# 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 for my holidays. 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**):

- Liz **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 I were in Tom's position, I **might** look for another job.

The situation here is not real because I am *not* in Tom's position (so I'm not going to look for another job). **May** is not possible in this example.

C

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

- Don't phone at 8.30. I'll be watching the film on television.
- Don't phone at 8.30. I **might be watching** (*or I may be watching*) the film on television. (= 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 **may be going** (*or I might be going*) to Ireland in July. (possible)

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

D

**Might as well**

Rose 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 **may as well** get a taxi. (= taxis are as good, no more expensive)

### 30.1 Write sentences with might.

- 1 Where are you going for your holidays? (to Ireland???)  
I haven't decided yet. I might go to Ireland.
- 2 What sort of car are you going to buy? (a Mercedes???)  
I'm not sure yet. I .....
- 3 What are you doing this weekend? (go to London???)  
I haven't decided yet. ....
- 4 When is Tom coming to see us? (on Saturday???)  
He hasn't said yet. ....
- 5 Where are you going to hang that picture? (in the dining room???)  
I haven't made up my mind yet. ....
- 6 What is Julia 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

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

### 30.3 Complete the sentences using might be able to or might have to + a suitable verb.

- 1 I can't help you, but why don't you ask Jane? She might be able to help you.
- 2 I can't meet you this evening, but I ..... you tomorrow.
- 3 I'm not working on Saturday, but I ..... on Sunday.
- 4 I can come to the meeting, but I ..... before the end.

### 30.4 Write sentences with might not.

- 1 I'm not sure that Liz will come to the party.  
Liz might not come to the party.
- 2 I'm not sure that I'll go out this evening.  
I .....
- 3 I'm not sure that we'll get tickets for the concert.  
We .....
- 4 I'm not sure that Sue will be able to come out with us this evening.  
.....

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

- 1 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.
- 2 You have a free ticket for a concert. You're not very keen on the concert, but you decide to go.  
You say: I ..... to the concert. It's a pity to waste a free ticket.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.