

Modals of Deduction (must, might, can't) – Worksheet 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Score: / 36



Do this worksheet
online and check your
answers instantly

Exercise 1: Must, might or can't?

Complete each sentence with *must*, *might* or *can't*.

Example: It's very cold outside. You ___ be freezing! → must

1. Anna has been running for an hour. She _____ be very tired.
2. That man _____ be a doctor. He's only about fifteen years old.
3. I'm not sure where Tom is. He _____ be in the library.
4. The lights are off and nobody is answering the door. They _____ be at home.
5. You've just won the competition! You _____ be so happy.
6. Take an umbrella. It _____ rain later – the sky looks a bit grey.
7. This bag _____ be Lisa's. She never carries a pink bag.
8. Paul speaks perfect Japanese. He _____ practise a lot.

Exercise 2: Complete with phrases from the box

Complete the sentences with a phrase from the box. There are two extra phrases you do not need.

WORD BOX

must be can't be might be might not be must have can't have must be working
mustn't be can be

9. Look at their huge house. They _____ a lot of money.
10. Kevin _____ hungry. He has just eaten two pizzas.
11. Sara isn't answering her phone. She _____ busy – I'm not sure.
12. The restaurant is always full. The food _____ really good.
13. I'm not sure Leo will come to the party. He _____ well enough.
14. He _____ any money left. He spent it all on new shoes yesterday.
15. There's a light on in Dad's office. He _____ late again.

Exercise 3: Rewrite the sentences

Rewrite each sentence using must, might or can't. Keep the meaning the same.

Example: I'm sure Jo is at the station. → Jo must be at the station.

16. I'm sure Emma is at work.

17. It's impossible that this is the right address.

18. Perhaps Daniel is ill.

19. I'm certain they are tired after the long journey.

20. I'm sure that isn't Maria's coat.

21. Maybe the shop is closed today.

22. I'm sure you are joking!

23. Perhaps she doesn't know the answer.

Exercise 4: Find and correct the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake. Write the correct sentence.

Example: He might is at home. → He might be at home.

24. She must to be at the gym.

25. He mustn't be Spanish – he doesn't speak any Spanish.

26. They might are on holiday.

27. It can be true! I don't believe it.

28. You must being really excited about your trip.

29. Ben might not knows about the meeting.

30. That can't is the right bus.

Exercise 5: Put the words in order

Put the words in the correct order to make sentences or questions.

Example: be / she / must / late → She must be late.

31. be / must / tired / you

32. be / can't / he / serious

33. might / at / she / home / be

34. the / keys / be / might / in / car / the

35. must / they / a lot / be / studying

36. who / be / that / might

Answer key – Modals of Deduction (must, might, can't) – Worksheet 1

Exercise 1: Must, might or can't?

1. must

We are almost sure, so we use must.

2. can't

It is impossible, so we use can't.

3. might

We are not sure, so we use might.

4. can't

The evidence shows it is impossible, so we use can't.

5. must

We are almost certain, so we use must.

6. might

Rain is possible but not certain, so we use might.

7. can't

We are sure it is not true, so we use can't.

8. must

His perfect Japanese is strong evidence, so we use must.

Exercise 2: Complete with phrases from the box

9. must have

Must + have shows we are sure they own a lot of money.

10. can't be

After two pizzas, it is impossible that he is hungry.

11. might be

'I'm not sure' tells us to use might.

12. must be

A full restaurant is good evidence, so we use must be.

13. might not be

The negative of might is might not, followed by the base form.

14. can't have

He spent everything, so it is impossible that he has money.

15. must be working

Must be + -ing is used for a deduction about an action happening now.

Exercise 3: Rewrite the sentences

16. Emma must be at work.

'I'm sure' becomes must.

17. This can't be the right address.

'It's impossible' becomes can't.

18. Daniel might be ill.

'Perhaps' becomes might.

19. They must be tired after the long journey.

'I'm certain' becomes must.

20. That can't be Maria's coat.

'I'm sure ... isn't' becomes can't, not mustn't.

21. The shop might be closed today.

'Maybe' becomes might.

22. You must be joking!

'I'm sure' becomes must.

23. She might not know the answer.

A negative possibility uses might not + base form.

Exercise 4: Find and correct the mistake

24. She must be at the gym.

Modals are followed by the base form without 'to'.

25. He can't be Spanish – he doesn't speak any Spanish.

For impossibility we use can't, not mustn't.

26. They might be on holiday.

After might we use the base form 'be'.

27. It can't be true! I don't believe it.

The speaker thinks it is impossible, so we need can't.

28. You must be really excited about your trip.

Must is followed by the base form 'be'.

29. Ben might not know about the meeting.

After a modal, the verb has no -s.

30. That can't be the right bus.

Can't is followed by the base form 'be'.

Exercise 5: Put the words in order

31. You must be tired.

Subject + must + be + adjective.

32. He can't be serious.

Subject + can't + be + adjective.

33. She might be at home.

Subject + might + be + place.

34. The keys might be in the car.

Subject + might + be + place.

35. They must be studying a lot.

Must + be + -ing for an action happening around now.

36. Who might that be?

In questions, the question word comes first, then the modal and the subject.

Notes for teachers: Start by showing a picture and asking learners what must, might or can't be true about it. Then work through the exercises from controlled to freer practice. Typical mistakes include adding 'to' or '-s' after the modal, and using 'mustn't' instead of 'can't' for impossibility. As a follow-up, learners can describe a mystery object or a photo of a stranger's room using all three modals.