



Modals of Possibility

MUST

90 - 100%
(sure it's true)

She **must be** in the garden. (=I'm sure she is in the garden)

They **must know** each other.

MAY/MIGHT (NOT)

30 - 50%
(maybe true)

He **may/might be** be late.

30 - 50%
(maybe NOT true)

He **may/might NOT remember** who you are (=Maybe he does NOT remember)

CAN'T

90 - 100%
(sure NOT true)

She **can't be** his mother. (=I'm sure she is NOT his mom)

He just left.
He **can't be** too far.



Use **can't** (NOT **mustn't**)

- ✗ He's just left. He **mustn't** be too far.
- ✓ He's just left. He **can't** be too far.

Use **may/might** (NOT **can**)

- ✗ He **isn't** here. He **can** be at home.
- ✓ He **isn't** here. He **might** be at home.



+ be + -ing verb

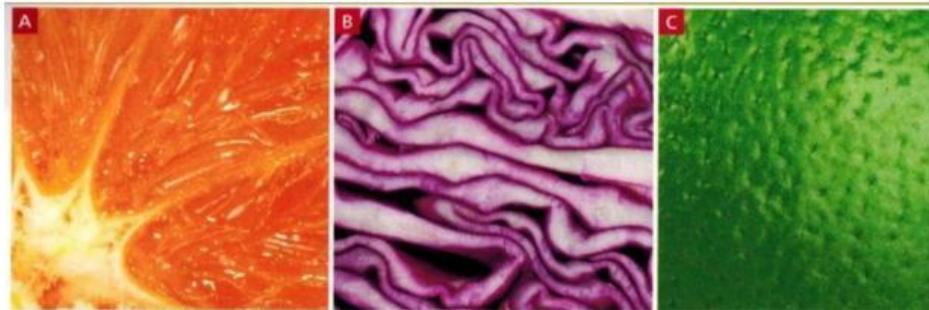
To speculate about actions in progress
They are in Ibiza. They **must be having** a great time.

You are always hungry. I think that you **might not be eating** enough.

New study suggests that air pollution **may be making** people unhappy.



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1. Look at the photos. What do you think they are.

2. Listen to the conversation and write the words you hear in the gaps.

A It _____ be anything like an apple because they don't have that kind of middle.

B It _____ be a lemon. They look like that in the centre.

C It _____ be an orange. It's the right shape for an orange.

3. Match the modals of possibility from Activity 2 to their meanings A - C. What verb form comes after each modal verb? _____

A I'm sure it is.

1. Could

B. It's possible.

2. Must

C. I'm sure is not.

3. Can't



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Ü + modal verb + verb in infinitive + C

4. Complete the sentences using **must**, **might/could** or **can't** + a form of the verb be or have

- 1 He _____ vegetarian because I saw him eating a steak.
2. It _____ time to go! All the others have left.
3. They _____ international food; but probably not. It's a local restaurant.
4. The restaurant _____ a table tonight if they're not busy.
5. This milk _____ past its use-by date. I only bought it this morning.
6. There _____ a mistake on this bill. I didn't order champagne!



LANGUAGE TIP

Could, might and may can also be used to say that something is possible in the future.

For example: I might be late tonight.



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