

PAST MODAL VERBS OF PROBABILITY

1 THEORY

Task 1: Study how to form modal verbs of probability in the table below.

Subject	Modal Verb of Probability	Have	Past Participle
I You He She We It They	must might could may can't / couldn't	have	gone... met... eaten... been... paid... played... watched...

Task 2: Study the strength of each modal verb in the table below.

The Probability	
Must have	95% sure that something is true / did happen
Might have	Maybe (50%)
Could have	Maybe (50%)
May have	Maybe (50%)
Can't / Couldn't have	95% sure that something is <u>not</u> true / did happen



2 COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

Task: Match the sentence halves together to create full sentences.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. I saw John running to work. | a. John must have drank it! 6 |
| 2. My car windows are frozen. | b. He can't have been happy. 5 |
| 3. Beth can't find her glasses. | c. It must have been very cold last night. 2 |
| 4. Sarah drove to work this morning. | d. She might have left them at the office. 3 |
| 5. He failed his driving test. | e. He must have been late for a meeting. 1 |
| 6. All the wine is gone! | f. She could have been late due to the traffic. 4 |

3 USING PAST TENSE MODAL VERBS OF PROBABILITY

Read the sentences below, then fill in the gaps using the correct modal verb.

- Where did your parents go on holiday?
 - I'm not 100% sure, they **might / could / may have gone** (go) to France because they love Paris.
- Did he commit the crime?
 - No, he **couldn't have committed** (commit) the crime because he was not in the city at the time.
- Did Lucy attend school yesterday?
 - She **might / could / may have attended**, but I don't know because I didn't see her.
- Where are John and Sarah? They said they would be here 20 minutes ago.
 - They **must have gotten** lost. I'll call them now.
- I can't find my phone anywhere!
 - You **might / could / may have left** it at the office.
- Why did the teacher cancel the class?
 - He did not say but he **must have been** sick.



4 WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS HAPPENED?

Task: Use modal verbs to write about the pictures below. What do you think has happened?

1.



2.



3.



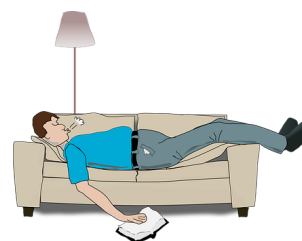
4.



5.



6.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____



5 MODAL VERBS: DISCUSSION

Task: Work in pairs. Create answers to the hypothetical questions below.

- Use past tense modal verbs of probability in your answers.
- Try to create fun, outlandish answers!

1. Why did Juan fail his Spanish exam?
2. Why do you think David was late for work?
3. His old car broke down. Why did he not buy a new car?
4. Why did he not finish his dinner?
5. Why did the CEO quit his job? He was earning a lot of money!
6. Why did he delete his Facebook account?
7. Why did he not watch the movie?
8. Why did he go to New York on holiday?
9. Why did Darren eat all the cake?
10. Why do you think he didn't call you yesterday?
11. Why do you think Beth didn't go to football practice last night?
12. Why didn't Emma take the last piece of cake?
13. Why did they cancel the outdoor event? The weather was perfect.
14. Why didn't Sarah join the hiking trip yesterday?
15. Why did Alex choose to study economics instead of computer science?
16. Why did the company lay off so many employees? The business was doing well.
17. Why didn't they invite you to the party? You're good friends with them.
18. Why did Karen sell her bike? She loved riding it every weekend.
19. Why did Mark return the expensive gift? It was a thoughtful present.
20. Why didn't Julie finish reading the book? She was enjoying it.



6 MODAL VERBS: ROLE PLAY

Work in pairs. Read and complete each role play scenario below.

- Use past tense modal verbs of probability in your answers.
- Have a natural conversation in each scenario.
- Switch roles and scenarios when the conversation concludes.
- Try to create fun, outlandish conversations !

Scenario 1: Lost Keys

Student A: You lost your keys yesterday. Explain to Student B where you think you might have left them.

Student B: Listen to Student A's explanation and respond, suggesting where the keys could have ended up.

Scenario 2: Mysterious Noise

Student A: You heard a strange noise in your apartment last night. Describe the noise and speculate about what might have caused it.

Student B: Listen to Student A's description and offer possible explanations for the noise.

Scenario 3: Missing Wallet

Student A: You can't find your wallet. Discuss with Student B what might have happened to it and where you could have left it.

Student B: Listen to Student A's ideas and suggest other places the wallet might be.

Scenario 4: Late to Work

Student A: You were late to work this morning. Talk to Student B about the reasons that might have caused you to be late.

Student B: Listen to Student A's reasons and respond with your thoughts on what could have happened.



HOMework

1 REARRANGE THE WORDS

Rearrange the following words to create correct sentences. **Answers on the next page.**

1. / might have / the cat / out of / the back door / escaped /
2. / the train / must have / already / left / the station /
3. / the keys / the kitchen counter / on / she / must have / left /
4. / the dog / have / to the park / might / run off /
5. / the book / she / at home / left / may have /
6. / the storm / the power / the strong winds / knocked out / could have /
7. / they / the movie / seen / couldn't have / the tickets / because / lost /
8. / the children / the cookies / might have / eaten / from the jar /
9. / the meeting / delayed / the heavy traffic / must have / due to / been /
10. / the wallet / the store / may have / at / left / he /
11. / the students / might have / to the field trip / forgotten / the permission slips /
12. / the keys / in / might have / the car / been / left /



Homework answers:

1. The cat might have escaped out of the back door.
2. The train must have already left the station.
3. She must have left the keys on the kitchen counter.
4. The dog might have run off to the park.
5. She may have left the book at home.
6. The strong winds from the storm could have knocked out the power.
7. They couldn't have seen the movie because they lost the tickets.
8. The children might have eaten the cookies from the jar.
9. The meeting must have been delayed due to the heavy traffic.
10. He may have left the wallet at the store.
11. The students might have forgotten the permission slips for the field trip.
12. The keys might have been left in the car.

