

Practice Exercises – Modal Verbs (Deductions - present time)

Review the *Modal Verbs used to make Deductions about the present* before doing the exercises. Choose the answer that is grammatically correct in the context of the sentence. There is only one correct answer.

Practice Exercises – Modal Verbs (Deductions – present time):

- John always gets high marks. I'm sure he _____ study very hard.
 - can't
 - may not
 - might
 - must
- Susan lives in an enormous villa in Monte Carlo on the French Riviera. She _____ be very rich.
 - couldn't
 - must
 - may not
 - can't
- Carol isn't at home. She _____ be out shopping now, but I'm not really sure.
 - can't
 - couldn't
 - must
 - may
- Pamela's just inherited a fortune. I'm sure she _____ be celebrating.
 - can't
 - couldn't
 - must
 - might
- I don't know why Bud hasn't been able to get a job yet. He _____ make a good impression during a job interview.
 - must
 - may
 - not able to
 - might not
- Mary's not in her office, but I'm sure she _____ be having lunch already! It's only 9 a.m.
 - can't
 - must
 - ought
 - may not
- You've been sightseeing all day. I'm sure you _____ be exhausted.
 - can't
 - may
 - must
 - might not
- It's 10:30 p.m. now. Carol's train arrives at 10 p.m., so she _____ be here any minute now.
 - can't
 - couldn't
 - should
 - won't
- Someone's knocking at the door. It _____ be Joe; he's still in school.
 - can't
 - must
 - should
 - has

Practice Exercises – Modal Verbs (Deductions – present time):

10. Connie is elegantly dressed tonight. She _____ be going to a formal party, but I'm not sure.
a. couldn't
b. can't
c. might
d. has
11. Cathy looks bored. Do you think she _____ want to leave the party soon?
a. may
b. ought
c. can't
d. couldn't
12. That _____ be a spider! It only has six legs.
a. can't
b. must
c. might not
d. should
13. I'm sure the girl in the red dress _____ be Mary's twin sister. She looks exactly like her.
a. may
b. can't
c. must
d. couldn't
14. Jim _____ be working as a janitor! That's impossible; he drives a Ferrari.
a. must
b. could
c. might not
d. can't
15. Jim: "Where's Sue? She's not at her desk?" Bill: "I really don't know; it's 10 a.m., so she _____ be having a coffee break."
a. might
b. ought
c. able to
d. needs
16. You _____ be tired now! You slept ten hours and you woke up only an hour ago!
a. must
b. should
c. can't
d. might not
17. Anita: "What language are they speaking?" Carol: "I'm not sure; they look Scandinavian, so it _____ be Swedish or Norwegian."
a. might
b. can't
c. ought
d. has
18. I always see Mr. Brown coming home at 7 a.m. I'm sure he _____ work at night.
a. may
b. must
c. has
d. need
19. Ben _____ be in New York already! It's impossible; his plane left Florence only an hour ago.
a. must
b. should
c. can't
d. might not

Practice Exercises – Modal Verbs (Deductions – present time):

20. Laura: "Who's Tom dancing with?" Jean: "I don't know; it _____ be his new girlfriend or his cousin".

- a. could
- b. has
- c. must
- d. ought

21. My car won't start this morning. It _____ be the battery! I changed it last week!

- a. could
- b. must
- c. might
- d. can't

22. The doctor's car is outside Beth's house. I'm sure it's her elderly grandmother who _____ be ill.

- a. must
- b. may
- c. has
- d. should

23. Al: "Jill hasn't come to any of our parties lately." Bill: "She _____ be in the mood; she broke up with her fiancé recently."

- a. can't
- b. must
- c. might not
- d. should

24. Bill _____ be at work at 10 p.m.! His office building closes at 8 p.m.!

- a. must
- b. may not
- c. can't
- d. should

25. Ann: "I spent \$400 on a pair of *Lord & Taylor* sandals. I'm sure you _____ think I'm crazy." Sue: "You're right!"

- a. can't
- b. might
- c. must
- d. couldn't

26. Lori _____ be at home now. She's sometimes out with her dog at this time.

- a. should
- b. may not
- c. must
- d. couldn't

27. Al: "Where's Art?" Abe: "I don't know. He _____ be at the golf club. He sometimes goes there after work."

- a. must
- b. might
- c. couldn't
- d. can't

28. Lee: "I feel a draft of cold air. The bathroom window _____ surely be open. Please close it." Al: "OK."

- a. can't
- b. must
- c. could
- d. ought

29. Tom isn't answering the door. He _____ be at home. Perhaps he decided to go to the gym.

- a. must
- b. has
- c. couldn't
- d. might not

Practice Exercises – Modal Verbs (Deductions – present time):

30. It's so hot today. I'm sure it _____ be at least 30°C!
a. can't
b. must
c. may
d. has
31. Today _____ be the first of April! I'm sure yesterday was the first of the month.
a. can't
b. must
c. might not
d. should
32. Bill sometimes works overtime on Tuesdays, so since tonight is Tuesday, he _____ arrive home late.
a. may
b. can't
c. must
d. couldn't
33. You only had an apple for lunch. I'm sure you _____ be starving!
a. must
b. might
c. can't
d. couldn't
34. Jo: "Who's ringing the doorbell?" Sue: "It _____ be Jane; it's too early. She's still at work at this time."
a. must
b. may not
c. can't
d. should
35. I keep forgetting where I've put my glasses. I'm sure you _____ think that I'm losing my memory!
a. can't
b. couldn't
c. must
d. should
36. I don't know why Anita isn't answering her cell phone. If she's out jogging, she _____ have it on *silent*.
a. might
b. ought
c. needs
d. has
37. Ed's not at home. Today's Friday and he sometimes visits his aunt on Fridays, so he _____ be there now.
a. ought
b. could
c. can't
d. couldn't
38. Ann was awake all night, so she _____ still be sleeping. It's only 7 a.m.
a. must
b. ought
c. can't
d. shouldn't