

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.
a. can't
b. may not
c. might
d. **must**
- Susan lives in an enormous villa in Monte Carlo on the French Riviera. She _____ be very rich.
a. couldn't
b. **must**
c. may not
d. can't
- Carol isn't at home. She _____ be out shopping now, but I'm not really sure.
a. can't
b. couldn't
c. must
d. **may**
- Pamela's just inherited a fortune. I'm sure she _____ be celebrating.
a. can't
b. couldn't
c. **must**
d. 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.
a. must
b. may
c. not able to
d. **might not**
- Mary's not in her office, but I'm sure she _____ be having lunch already! It's only 9 a.m.
a. **can't**
b. must
c. ought
d. may not
- You've been sightseeing all day. I'm sure you _____ be exhausted.
a. can't
b. may
c. **must**
d. might not
- It's 10:30 p.m. now. Carol's train arrives at 10 p.m., so she _____ be here any minute now.
a. can't
b. couldn't
c. **should**
d. won't
- Someone's knocking at the door. It _____ be Joe; he's still in school.
a. **can't**
b. must
c. should
d. has

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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