

UNIT 30 May and might (future)

- a) We use **may** or **might** to talk about possible happenings or possible actions in the future. Study these examples:

- I'm not sure where to go for my holidays but I **may** go to Italy.
(= perhaps I will go)
- The weather forecast is not very good. It **might** rain this afternoon.
(= perhaps it will rain)
- I can't help you. Why don't you ask Tom? He **might be** able to help you.
(= perhaps he will be able to help)

The negative form is **may not** or **might not (mightn't)**:

- Ann **may not** come to the party tonight. She isn't feeling well.
(= perhaps she won't come)
- There **might not be** a meeting on Friday because the director is ill.
(= perhaps there won't be a meeting.)

It doesn't matter whether you use **may** or **might**. You can say:

- I **may** go to Italy. or I **might** go to Italy.

- b) There is also a continuous form: **may/might be doing**. Compare this with **will be doing** (see Unit 10a,b):

- Don't phone at 8.30. I'll **be watching** the football match on television.
- Don't phone at 8.30. I **may (or might) be watching** the football match on television. (= perhaps I'll be in the middle of watching it)

You can also use the continuous (**may/might be doing**) when you are talking about possible plans. Compare:

- I'm **going** to Italy in July. (for sure)
- I **may (or might) be going** to Italy in July. (it's possible)

But you can also say: I **may/might go** to Italy in July.

- c) **May as well, might as well**

Study this example:

A: What shall we do this evening?

B: I don't know. Any ideas?

A: Well, there's a film on television. It sounds quite interesting.

B: **We might as well watch** it then. There's nothing else to do.

We use **may/might as well** to say that we should do something but only because there is no reason not to do it and because there is nothing better to do. **We might as well watch** it means 'Why not watch it? There's nothing better to do.'

- You'll have to wait an hour for the next bus, so you **might as well walk**.
- **We may as well go** to the party. We've nothing else to do.
- 'Shall we have dinner now?' **'We might as well.'**

For **may** and **might** see also Units 29 and 36c. For **may** only, see Unit 31.

UNIT 30 Exercises

30.1 *In this exercise you have to talk about your (and other people's) future plans. But you are not sure what is going to happen. Use may or might.*

Example: Where are you going for your holidays? (to Italy???)

I haven't finally decided but I may (or might) go to Italy.

1 What sort of car are you going to buy? (a Mercedes???)

I'm not sure yet but I

2 What are you doing this weekend? (go to London???)

I don't know for sure but

3 Where are you going to hang that picture? (in the dining-room???)

I haven't made up my mind yet but

4 When is Tom coming to see us? (tomorrow evening???)

I'm not sure but

5 What's Jill going to do when she leaves school? (a secretarial course???)

She hasn't decided yet but

30.2 *This time you have to talk about possible happenings. Use the word(s) in brackets.*

Examples: Do you think it will rain this afternoon? (may) It may rain this afternoon.

Do you think Ann will come to the party? (might not)

She might not come to the party.

1 Do you think Tom will be late? (may) He

2 Do you think Ann will be able to find our house? (might not) She

3 Do you think there'll be an election this year? (might) There

4 Do you think Tony will pass the exam? (may not)

5 Do you think they'll be waiting for us when we arrive? (might)

6 Do you think it'll snow later? (may)

30.3 *Now you have to read these situations and make sentences with may/might as well.*

Example: A friend has invited you to a party. You're not very keen to go but there isn't anything else to do. So you think you should go.

You say: I might as well go. There isn't anything else to do.

1 You're in a café with a friend. You've just finished your drinks. You're not in a hurry, so you think you should both have another drink.

You say: We What would you like?

2 Someone has given you a free ticket for a concert. You're not very keen on the concert, but you think you should go because you have a free ticket.

You say: I It's a pity to waste a free ticket.

3 You've invited some friends to dinner but they haven't come. The dinner has been ready for half an hour and you think you should begin without them.

You say: We I don't think they are coming.