

68 *might, may, must be, can't be*



1 *might (not) and may (not)*

We use *might (not)* when we think something is true or will be true but we aren't sure:
'Who's second?' 'It might be the one with the pink cap.'
Jenny might be at home now. Call her.
The parcel might not arrive tomorrow.

In more formal English we can use *may (not)* when we aren't sure about something:
Mr Clement may be with a client. I'll just check for you.
The order may not arrive next week.

NATURAL ENGLISH We don't often form questions with *may* or *might*.

We prefer to use *Do you think ... ?*:
Do you think they've got any cheap trainers?
Do you think the order will arrive this week?

2 *must be and can't be*

If we are almost certain that something is true, we use *must be*:
You're very late home. You must be tired.
I can't find the cat. She must be somewhere upstairs.

If we are almost certain that something is not true, we use *can't be*:
This ring was very cheap so it can't be gold.
That boy looks exactly like Sam but it can't be him – he's at school.