

## May and might 2

A

We use **may** and **might** to talk about possible actions or happenings in the future:

- ☐ I haven't decided yet where to go on holiday. I **may go** to Ireland. (= perhaps I will go there)
- ☐ Take an umbrella with you. It **might rain** later. (= perhaps it will rain)
- ☐ The bus isn't always on time. We **might have** to wait a few minutes. (= perhaps we will have to wait)

The negative forms are **may not** and **might not (mightn't)**:

- ☐ Amy **may not go** out tonight. She isn't feeling well. (= perhaps she will not go out)
- ☐ There **might not be** enough time to discuss everything at the meeting. (= perhaps there will not be enough time)

Compare **will** and **may/might**:

- ☐ I'll **be** late this evening. (for sure)
- ☐ I **may/might** be late this evening. (possible)

B

Usually you can use **may** or **might**. So you can say:

- ☐ I **may go** to Ireland. or I **might go** to Ireland.
- ☐ Jane **might be** able to help you. or Jane **may be** able to help you.

But we use only **might (not may)** when the situation is *not real*:

- ☐ If they paid me better, I **might** work harder. (*not* I may work)

The situation here is not real because they do *not* pay me well, so I'm not going to work harder.

C

There is a continuous form: **may/might be -ing**. Compare this with **will be -ing**:

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

We also use **may/might be -ing** for possible plans. Compare:

- ☐ I'm **going** to Ireland in July. (for sure)
- ☐ I **might be going** (or I **may be going**) to Ireland soon. (possible)

But you can also say 'I **might go** / I **may go** ...' with little difference in meaning.

D

## Might as well

Helen and Clare have just missed the bus. The buses run every hour.

What shall we do? Shall we walk?

We **might as well**. It's a nice day and I don't want to wait here for an hour.

We **might as well** do something = We should do it because there is no better alternative. There is no reason not to do it.

**May as well** is also possible.

- ☐ A: What time are you going out?  
B: Well, I'm ready, so I **might as well go** now.
- ☐ Buses are so expensive these days, you **might as well get** a taxi. (= taxis are as good, no more expensive)

