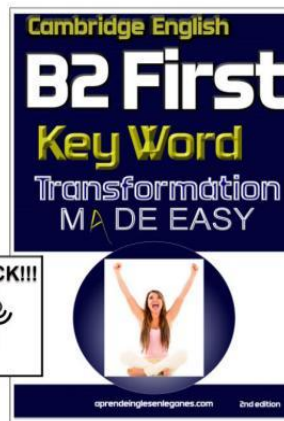


MODAL VERBS:

SPECULATION & DEDUCTION ABOUT THE PAST



B2 FIRST
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Key Word
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exercises

We can use modal verbs to speculate or guess if something is true using the available information. The modal verb we choose will depend on how certain we are about the possibility. This table will help you understand how to use modal verbs to make deductions about the past.

<p>MAY MIGHT COULD have + past participle (+ ing) have been + past participle It's possible that something happen or was true in the past.</p>	<p>CLUE WORDS: perhaps , possibly, probably , maybe , it's possible (that) , there's a chance (that) , ... but I'm not sure , I think ... because...</p>	<p>KEY WORDS: HAVE, MAY,MIGHT, COULD, PAST PARTICIPLE</p>
	ORIGINAL SENTENCE	TRANSFORMED SENTENCE with modals
	Perhaps he has already been informed.	He may/might/could have already been informed .
	He possibly forgot about the meeting.	He may/might/could have forgotten about the meeting.
	They probably overheard what she said.	They may/might/could have overheard what she said.
	Maybe John has been waiting for you there.	John may/might/could have been waiting for you there.
	It's possible that he has already finished.	He may/might/could have already finished .
	There is a chance that she was lying to you.	She may/might/could have been lying to you.
I think she got a taxi home, but I'm not sure .	She may/might/could have got a taxi home.	

<p>MUST have + past participle (+ ing) have been + past participle We feel sure that something happened or was true in the past, or it was the only realistic possibility.</p>	<p>CLUE WORDS: I'm sure (that) , I'm certain (that) , I'm positive (that) , I have no doubt (that) , there is no doubt (that) , so... likely...</p>	<p>KEY WORDS: HAVE, MUST, PAST PARTICIPLE</p>
	ORIGINAL SENTENCE	TRANSFORMED SENTENCE with modals
	I'm sure that you knew that we had a test today – the teacher sent us all a message.	You must have known that we had a test today – the teacher sent us all a message.
	I'm certain that they have overheard what she said.	They must have overheard what she said.
	I'm positive that he has not been informed.	He must not have been informed .
	I have no doubt that she has been lying to us.	She must have been lying to us.
	There is no doubt that he was trying to trick you out of your money.	He must have been trying to trick you out of your money.
He had been working on the project for months, so he was likely exhausted.	He had been working on the project for months, so he must have been exhausted.	

<p>CAN'T COULDN'T have + past participle (+ ing) have been + past participle We feel sure that something was not possible.</p>	<p>CLUE WORDS: It's imposible (that) , It's not possible (that) ..., I know... because...</p>	<p>KEY WORDS: HAVE, CAN'T, PAST PARTICIPLE</p>
	ORIGINAL SENTENCE	TRANSFORMED SENTENCE with modals
	It's impossible that he has already been informed about it. He wasn't at the meeting.	He can't /couldn't have already been informed about it. He wasn't at the meeting.
	It's not possible that you saw him at school yesterday. He's been sick all week.	You can't/couldn't have seen him at school yesterday. He's been sick all week.
	It's not possible that he's driven there. His car keys are still here.	He can't/couldn't have driven there. His car keys are still here.
I know he wasn't in Barcelona last Monday because I saw him in Madrid that day.	He can't/couldn't have been in Barcelona last Monday because I saw him in Madrid that day.	