

CLASS- SHASTRI-1ST YEAR

SUBJECT- ENGLISH

**Book Intermediate English Grammar
by Raymond Murphy**

Dr. Kavita Bisaria

Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan

Lucknow Campus, Lucknow

Unit 16

Past perfect continuous (I had been doing)

A Study this example situation:

yesterday morning



Yesterday morning I got up and looked out of the window. The sun was shining, but the ground was very wet.

It had been raining.

It was *not* raining when I looked out of the window; the sun was shining. But it **had been** raining before.

Had been -ing is the *past perfect continuous*:

I/we/you/they he/she/it	had	(= I'd etc.) (= he'd etc.)	been	doing working playing etc.
----------------------------	-----	-------------------------------	------	----------------------------------

Some more examples:

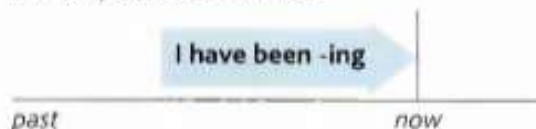
- When the boys came into the house, their clothes were dirty, their hair was untidy and one of them had a black eye. They'd **been fighting**.
- I was very tired when I got home. I'd **been working** hard all day.
- When I went to Madrid a few years ago, I stayed with a friend of mine. She **hadn't been living** there very long, but she knew the city very well.

B You can say that something **had been happening** for a period of time before something else happened:

- We'd **been playing** tennis for about half an hour when it started to rain heavily.
- Paul went to the doctor last Friday. He **hadn't been feeling** well for some time.

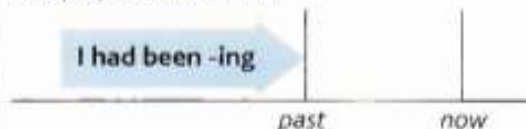
C Compare **have been -ing** (*present perfect continuous*) and **had been -ing** (*past perfect continuous*):

Present perfect continuous



- I hope the bus comes soon. I've **been waiting** for 20 minutes. (*before now*)
- James is out of breath. He **has been running**.

Past perfect continuous



- At last the bus came. I'd **been waiting** for 20 minutes. (*before the bus came*)
- James was out of breath. He **had been running**.

D Compare **was -ing** (*past continuous*) and **had been -ing**:

- It **wasn't raining** when we went out. The sun **was shining**. But it **had been raining**, so the ground was wet.
- Katherine **was sitting** in an armchair resting. She was tired because she'd **been working** very hard.

E Some verbs (for example, **know** and **like**) are not normally used in the continuous:

- We were good friends. We **had known** each other for years. (*not had been knowing*)
- I was surprised when Lisa cut her hair. She'd **had** long hair since I first met her. (*not she'd been having*)

For a list of these verbs, see Unit 4A. For **have**, see Unit 17.

Have and have got

A Have and have got (= for possession, relationships, illnesses etc.)

You can use **have** or **have got**. There is no difference in meaning:

- They **have** a new car. *or* They've **got** a new car.
- Lisa **has** two brothers. *or* Lisa's **got** two brothers.
- I **have** a headache. *or* I've **got** a headache.
- Our house **has** a small garden. *or* Our house **has got** a small garden.
- He **has** a few problems. *or* He's **got** a few problems.

With these meanings (possession etc.), you cannot use continuous forms (**am having** etc.):

- We're enjoying our holiday. We **have** / We've **got** a nice room in the hotel. (*not* We're having a nice room)

For the past we use **had** (without **got**):

- Lisa **had** long hair when she was a child. (*not* Lisa had got)

B In questions and negative sentences there are three possible forms:

Do you have any questions?	I don't have any questions.
Have you got any questions?	I haven't got any questions.
Have you any questions? (<i>less usual</i>)	I haven't any questions: (<i>less usual</i>)
Does she have a car?	She doesn't have a car.
Has she got a car?	She hasn't got a car.
Has she a car? (<i>less usual</i>)	She hasn't a car. (<i>less usual</i>)

In past questions and negative sentences we use **did/didn't**:

- Did** you **have** a car when you were living in Paris?
- I **didn't have** my phone, so I couldn't call you.
- Lisa **had** long hair, **didn't** she?

C Have breakfast / have a shower / have a good time etc.

We also use **have** (*but not have got*) for many actions and experiences. For example:

have	breakfast / dinner / a cup of coffee / something to eat etc.
	a bath / a shower / a swim / a break / a rest / a party / a holiday
	an accident / an experience / a dream
	a look (at something)
	a chat / a conversation / a discussion (with somebody)
	trouble / difficulty / fun / a good time etc.
	a baby (= give birth to a baby)

Have got is *not* possible in the expressions in the box. Compare:

- Sometimes I **have** (= eat) a sandwich for my lunch. (*not* I've got)
- but* I've **got** / I **have** some sandwiches. Would you like one?

You can use continuous forms (**am having** etc.) with the expressions in the box:

- We're enjoying our holiday. We're **having** a great time. (*not* We have)
- Mark **is having** a shower at the moment. He has a shower every day.

In questions and negative sentences we use **do/does/did**:

- I **don't** usually **have** a big breakfast. (*not* I usually haven't)
- What time **does** Chris **have** lunch? (*not* has Chris lunch)
- Did** you **have** trouble finding a place to live?

Used to (do)

A Study this example situation:

a few years ago



Nicola doesn't travel much these days.
She prefers to stay at home.

But she **used to travel** a lot.
She **used to go** away two or three times a year.

She **used to travel** a lot = she travelled a lot often in the past, but she doesn't do this any more.

she used to travel

past

she doesn't
travel

now

B Something **used to** happen = it happened often in the past, but no longer happens:

- I **used to play** tennis a lot, but I don't play very much now.
- David **used to spend** a lot of money on clothes. These days he can't afford it.
- 'Do you go to the cinema much?' 'Not now, but I **used to.**' (= I used to go)

We also use **used to** ... for things that were true, but are not true any more:

- This building is now a furniture shop. It **used to be** a cinema.
- I **used to think** Mark was unfriendly, but now I realise he's a very nice person.
- I've started drinking tea recently. I never **used to like** it before.
- Lisa **used to have** very long hair when she was a child.

C 'I **used to** do something' is past. There is no present. You cannot say 'I use to do'. To talk about the present, use the present simple (I **do**).

Compare:

<i>past</i>	he used to play	we used to live	there used to be
<i>present</i>	he plays	we live	there is

- We **used to live** in a small village, but now we **live** in London.
- There **used to be** four cinemas in the town. Now there **is** only one.

D The normal question form is **did (you) use to ... ?**:

- Did you use to eat** a lot of sweets when you were a child?

The negative form is **didn't use to ... (used not to ... is also possible)**:

- I **didn't use to like** him. (or I **used not to like** him.)

E Compare I **used to do** and I **was doing**:

- I **used to watch** TV a lot. (= I watched TV often in the past, but I no longer do this)
- I **was watching** TV when Rob called. (= I was in the middle of watching TV)

F Do not confuse I **used to do** and I **am used to doing** (see Unit 61). The structures and meanings are different:

- I **used to live** alone. (= I lived alone in the past, but I no longer live alone)
- I **am used to living** alone. (= I live alone, and I don't find it strange or difficult because I've been living alone for some time)

Present tenses (I am doing / I do) for the future

A

Present continuous (I am doing) with a future meaning



This is Ben's diary for next week.

He **is playing** tennis on Monday afternoon.
 He **is going** to the dentist on Tuesday morning.
 He **is having** dinner with Kate on Friday.

In all these examples, Ben has already decided and arranged to do these things.

I'm **doing** something (tomorrow) = I have already decided and arranged to do it:

- a: What **are you doing** on Saturday evening? (not What do you do)
- b: I'm **going** to the theatre. (not I go)
- a: What time **is** Katherine **arriving** tomorrow?
- b: Half past ten. I'm **meeting** her at the station.
- I'm **not working** tomorrow, so we can go out somewhere.
- Steve **isn't playing** football next Saturday. He's hurt his leg.

'I'm **going to** (do)' is also possible in these sentences:

- What **are you going to do** on Saturday evening?

But the present continuous is more natural when we talk about arrangements. See Unit 20B.

Do not use **will** to talk about what you have arranged to do:

- What **are you doing** this evening? (not What will you do)
- Alex **is getting** married next month. (not will get)

You can also use the present continuous for an action *just before you begin to do it*. This happens especially with verbs of movement (go/come/leave etc.):

- I'm tired. I'm **going** to bed now. Goodnight. (not I go to bed now)
- 'Jess, are you ready yet?' 'Yes, I'm **coming**.' (not I come)

B

Present simple (I do) with a future meaning

We use the present simple when we talk about timetables, programmes etc. (for public transport, cinemas etc.):

- My train **leaves** at 11.30, so I need to be at the station by 11.15.
- What time **does** the film **start** this evening?
- It's Wednesday tomorrow. / Tomorrow **is** Wednesday.

You can use the present simple to talk about people if their plans are fixed like a timetable:

- I **start** my new job on Monday.
- What time **do** you **finish** work tomorrow?

But the continuous is more usual for personal arrangements:

- What time **are you meeting** Ann tomorrow? (not do you meet)

Compare:

Present continuous

- What time **are you arriving**?
- I'm **going** to the cinema this evening.

Present simple

- What time **does the train arrive**?
- The film starts** at 8.15 (this evening).

(I'm) going to (do)

A

I am going to do something = I have already decided to do it, I intend to do it:

- 'Are you going to eat anything?' 'No, I'm not hungry.'
- A: I hear Sarah has won some money. What is she going to do with it?
B: She's going to buy a new car.
- I'm just going to make a quick phone call. Can you wait for me?
- This cheese smells horrible. I'm not going to eat it.

B

I am doing and I am going to do

We use I am doing (*present continuous*) when we say what we have arranged to do – for example, arranged to meet somebody, arranged to go somewhere:

- What time are you meeting Ann this evening?
- I'm leaving tomorrow. I've got my plane ticket.

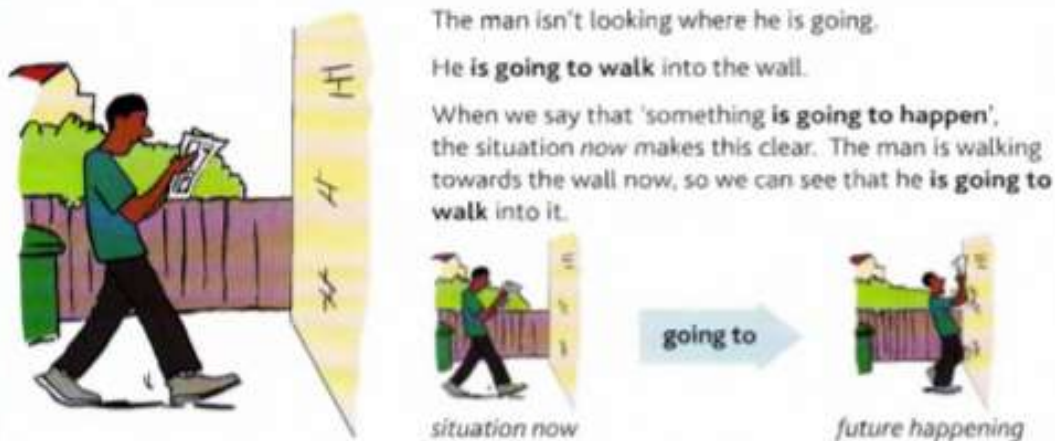
I am going to do something = I've decided to do it (but perhaps not arranged to do it):

- 'Your shoes are dirty.' 'Yes, I know. I'm going to clean them.' (= I've decided to clean them, but I haven't arranged to clean them)
- I've decided not to stay here any longer. Tomorrow I'm going to look for somewhere else to stay.

Often the difference is very small and either form is possible.

C

You can also say that 'something is going to happen' in the future. For example:



Some more examples:

- Look at those black clouds! It's going to rain. (the clouds are there now)
- I feel terrible. I think I'm going to be sick. (I feel terrible now)
- The economic situation is bad now and things are going to get worse.

D

I was going to do something = I intended to do it, but didn't do it.

- We were going to travel by train, but then we decided to go by car instead.
- Peter was going to do the exam, but he changed his mind.
- I was just going to cross the road when somebody shouted 'Stop!'

You can say that 'something was going to happen' (but didn't happen):

- I thought it was going to rain, but it didn't.

Will/shall 1

A

We use **I'll** (= **I will**) when we've just decided to do something. When we say '**I'll** do something', we announce our decision:

- Oh, I've left the door open. **I'll go** and shut it.
- 'What would you like to drink?' '**I'll have** an orange juice, please.'
- 'Did you phone Lucy?' 'Oh no, I forgot. **I'll phone** her now.'

You cannot use the *present simple* (**I do / I go** etc.) in these sentences:

- I'll go** and shut the door. (*not I go and shut*)

We often use **I think I'll ...** and **I don't think I'll ...** :

- I feel a bit hungry. **I think I'll have** something to eat.
- I don't think I'll go** out tonight. I'm too tired.

In spoken English the negative of **will** is usually **won't** (= **will not**):

- I can see you're busy, so **I won't stay** long.

B

Do *not* use **will** to talk about what you decided before (see Units 19–20):

- I'm going** on holiday next Saturday. (*not I'll go*)
- Are you working** tomorrow? (*not Will you work*)

C

We often use **will** in these situations:

Offering to do something

- That bag looks heavy. **I'll help** you with it. (*not I help*)

Agreeing to do something

- A: Can you give Tim this book?
- B: Sure, **I'll give** it to him when I see him this afternoon.

Promising to do something

- Thanks for lending me the money. **I'll pay** you back on Friday.
- I won't tell** anyone what happened. I promise.

Asking somebody to do something (Will you ... ?)

- Will you** please turn the music down? I'm trying to concentrate.

You can use **won't** to say that somebody refuses to do something:

- I've tried to give her advice, but she **won't listen**.
- The car **won't start**. (= the car 'refuses' to start)



D

Shall I ... ? Shall we ... ?

Shall is used mostly in the questions **shall I ... ? / shall we ... ?**

We use **shall I ... ? / shall we ... ?** to ask somebody's opinion (especially in offers or suggestions):

- Shall I** open the window? (= Do you want me to open the window?)
- I've got no money. What **shall I** do? (= What do you suggest?)
- '**Shall we** go?' 'Just a minute. I'm not ready yet.'
- 'Where **shall we** have lunch?' 'Let's go to Marino's.'

Compare **shall I ... ?** and **will you ... ?**:

- Shall I** shut the door? (= Do you want me to shut it?)
- Will you** shut the door? (= I want you to shut it)

Will/shall 2

A

We do not use **will** to say what somebody has already arranged or decided to do:

- Diane **is working** next week. (*not* Diane will work)
 - Are you going to watch** anything on TV this evening? (*not* Will you watch)
- For 'is working' and 'Are you going to ...?', see Units 19–20.

But often, when we talk about the future, we are *not* talking about what somebody has decided to do. For example:

Kate is doing an exam next week. Chris and Joe are talking about it.

Do you think Kate **will pass** the exam?



CHRIS

Yes, she'll **pass** easily



JOE

She'll pass does *not* mean 'she has decided to pass'. Joe is saying what he knows or believes will happen.

He is *predicting* the future.

When we predict a future happening or situation, we use **will/won't**.

Some more examples:

- They've been away a long time. When they return, they'll **find** a lot of changes here.
- 'Where **will** you **be** this time next year?' 'I'll **be** in Japan.'
- That plate is hot. If you touch it, you'll **burn** yourself.
- Tom **won't pass** the exam. He hasn't studied hard enough.
- Anna looks completely different now. You **won't recognise** her.
- When **will** you **get** your exam results?

B

We often use **will ('ll)** with:

probably

(I'm) **sure**

(I) **think**

(I) **don't think**

I **wonder**

- I'll **probably** be home late tonight.
- Don't worry about the exam. I'm **sure** you'll pass.
- Do you **think** Sarah **will** like the present we bought her?
- I **don't think** the exam **will** be very difficult.
- I **wonder** what **will** happen.

After I **hope**, we generally use the present (**will** is also possible):

- I hope Kate **passes** the exam. (*or* I hope Kate **will pass** ...)
- I hope it **doesn't rain** tomorrow.

C

Generally we use **will** to talk about *the future*, but sometimes we use **will** to talk about *now*.

For example:

- Don't phone Ann now. She'll **be** busy. (= she'll be busy *now*)

D

I shall ... / we shall ...

Normally we use **shall** only with **I** and **we**. You can say:

I shall or **I will** (**I'll**) **we shall** or **we will** (**we'll**)

- I **shall** be late this evening. (*or* I **will** be)
- We shall** probably go to France in June. (*or* **We will** probably go)

In spoken English we normally use **I'll** and **we'll**:

- We'll** probably go to France.

The negative of **shall** is **shall not** or **shan't**:

- I **shan't** be here tomorrow. (*or* I **won't** be)

Do not use **shall** with **he/she/it/you/they**:

- She **will** be very angry. (*not* She **shall** be)

I will and I'm going to

A

Future actions

Study the difference between **will** and **(be) going to**:

Sarah is talking to Helen:

Let's have a party.

That's a great idea.
We'll **invite** lots of people.



SARAH



HELEN

will ('ll): We use **will** to announce a new decision. The party is a new idea.



Later that day, Helen meets Dan:

Sarah and I have decided to have a party.
We're **going to invite** lots of people.



HELEN



DAN

(be) going to: We use **(be) going to** when we have *already decided* to do something. Helen had already decided to invite lots of people *before* she spoke to Dan.



Compare:

- 'Gary phoned while you were out.' 'OK. I'll **call** him back.'
- 'Gary **phoned** while you were out.' 'Yes, I know. I'm **going to call** him back.'
- 'Anna is in hospital.' 'Oh really? I didn't know. I'll **go** and visit her.'
- 'Anna is in hospital.' 'Yes, I know. I'm **going to visit** her this evening.'

B

Future happenings and situations (predicting the future)

We use both **will** and **going to** to predict future happenings and situations. So you can say:

- I think **the weather will be** nice later. *or*
I think **the weather is going to be** nice later.
- Those shoes are well-made. **They'll last** a long time. *or*
Those shoes are well-made. **They're going to last** a long time.

When we say something **is going to** happen, we know this from the situation now. What is happening now shows that something **is going to** happen in the future. For example:

- Look at those black clouds. It's **going to rain**. (*not* It will rain)
(We can see that it **is going to rain** from the clouds that are in the sky now.)
- I feel terrible. I think I'm **going to be sick**. (*not* I think I'll be sick)
(I think I'm **going to be sick** because I feel terrible now.)

Do not use **will** in this type of situation.

Will be doing and will have done

A

Study this example situation:

These people are standing in a queue to get into the cinema.



now

Half an hour from now, the cinema will be full. Everyone **will be watching** the film.



half an hour from now

Three hours from now, the cinema will be empty. The film **will have finished**. Everyone **will have gone** home.



three hours from now

B

I **will be doing** something (*future continuous*) = I will be in the middle of doing it:

- This time next week I'll be on holiday. I'll **be lying** on the beach or **swimming** in the sea.
- You have no chance of getting the job. You'll **be wasting** your time if you apply for it.

Compare **will be (do)ing** and **will (do)**:

- Don't phone between 7 and 8. We'll **be having** dinner.
- Let's wait for Liz to arrive and then we'll **have** dinner.

Compare **will be -ing** with other continuous forms:

- At 10 o'clock yesterday, Sally **was** in her office. She **was working**. (*past*)
- It's 10 o'clock now. She **is** in her office. She **is working**. (*present*)
- At 10 o'clock tomorrow, she **will be** in her office. She **will be working**.

C

We also use **will be -ing** to talk about complete actions in the future.

For example:

- The government **will be making** a statement about the crisis later today.
- Will you be going** away this summer?
- Later in the programme, I'll **be talking** to the Minister of Education ...
- Our best player is injured and **won't be playing** in the game on Saturday.



In these examples **will be -ing** is similar to **(be) going to ...**

D

We use **will have (done)** (*future perfect*) to say that something will already be complete before a time in the future. For example:

- Sally always leaves for work at 8.30 in the morning. She **won't be** at home at 9 o'clock – she'll **have gone** to work.
- We're late. The film **will already have started** by the time we get to the cinema.

Compare **will have (done)** with other perfect forms:

- Ted and Amy **have been** married for 24 years. (*present perfect*)
- Next year they **will have been** married for 25 years.
- When their son was born, they **had been** married for three years. (*past perfect*)

A

Study this example:



'I'll phone you when I get home' is a sentence with two parts:

the **main part**: I'll phone you
and the **when-part**: when I get home

The time in the sentence is future (tomorrow), but we use a *present tense* (I **get**) in the **when-part** of the sentence.

We do *not* use **will** in the **when-part** of the sentence.

Some more examples:

- We'll go out **when it stops** raining. (*not when it will stop*)
- When you are** in London again, come and see us. (*not When you will be*)
- (*said to a child*) What do you want to be **when you grow up**? (*not will grow*)

The same thing happens after **while / before / after / as soon as / until** or **till**:

- What are you going to do **while** I'm away? (*not while I will be*)
- I'll probably go back home on Sunday. **Before** I go, I'd like to visit the museum.
- Wait here **until (or till)** I come back.

B

You can also use the present perfect (**have done**) after **when / after / until / as soon as**:

- Can I borrow that book **when you've finished** with it?
- Don't say anything while Ian is here. Wait **until he has gone**.

If you use the present perfect, one thing must be complete *before* the other (so the two things do *not* happen together):

- When I've phoned** Kate, we can have dinner.
(= First I'll phone Kate and *after that* we can have dinner.)

Do not use the present perfect if the two things happen together:

- When I phone** Kate, I'll ask her about the party. (*not When I've phoned*)

It is often possible to use either the present simple or the present perfect:

- I'll come **as soon as I finish**. or I'll come **as soon as I've finished**.
- You'll feel better **after you have** something to eat. or You'll feel better **after you've had** something to eat.

C

After **if**, we normally use the present simple (**if I do / if I see** etc.) for the future:

- It's raining hard. We'll get wet **if we go** out. (*not if we will go*)
- I'll be angry **if it happens** again. (*not if it will happen*)
- Hurry up! **If we don't hurry**, we'll be late.

D

When and if

We use **when** for things which are *sure* to happen:

- I'm going out later. (*for sure*) **When** I go out, I'll get some bread.

We use **if** (*not when*) for things that will *possibly* happen:

- I might go out later. (*it's possible*) **If** I go out, I'll get some bread.
- If** it is raining this evening, I won't go out. (*not When it is raining*)
- Don't worry **if** I'm late tonight. (*not when I'm late*)
- If** they don't come soon, I'm not going to wait. (*not When they don't come*)

Can, could and (be) able to

A

We use **can** to say that something is possible or allowed, or that somebody has the ability to do something. We use **can + infinitive (can do / can see etc.)**:

- We **can see** the lake from our hotel.
- 'I don't have a pen.' 'You **can use** mine.'
- Can you speak** any foreign languages?
- I **can come** and see you tomorrow if you like.
- The word 'dream' **can be** a noun or a verb.

The negative is **can't (= cannot)**:

- I'm afraid I **can't come** to the party on Friday.

B

You can say that somebody **is able to** do something, but **can** is more usual:

- We **are able to see** the lake from our hotel.

But **can** has only two forms; **can (present)** and **could (past)**. So sometimes it is necessary to use **(be) able to**. Compare:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I can't sleep. <input type="checkbox"/> Tom can come tomorrow. <input type="checkbox"/> Maria can speak French, Spanish and English. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I haven't been able to sleep recently. <input type="checkbox"/> Tom might be able to come tomorrow. <input type="checkbox"/> Applicants for the job must be able to speak two foreign languages. |
|--|--|

C

Could

Sometimes **could** is the past of **can**. We use **could** especially with:

see hear smell taste feel remember understand

- We had a lovely room in the hotel. We **could see** the lake.
- As soon as I walked into the room, I **could smell** gas.
- I was sitting at the back of the theatre and **couldn't hear** very well.

We also use **could** to say that somebody had the general ability or permission to do something:

- My grandfather **could speak** five languages.
- We were totally free. We **could do** what we wanted. (= we were allowed to do)

D

Could and was able to

We use **could** for *general ability*. But if you want to say that somebody did something in a specific situation, use **was/were able to** or **managed to (not could)**:

- The fire spread through the building very quickly, but fortunately everybody **was able to escape / managed to escape**. (*not could escape*)
- We didn't know where David was, but we **managed to find / were able to find** him in the end. (*not could find*)

Compare:

- Jack was an excellent tennis player when he was younger. He **could beat** anybody. (= he had the *general ability* to beat anybody)

but Jack and Andy played a match yesterday. Andy played well, but Jack **managed to beat** him. (= he managed to beat him this time)

The negative **couldn't (could not)** is possible in all situations:

- My grandfather **couldn't swim**.
- We looked for David everywhere, but we **couldn't find** him.
- Andy played well, but he **couldn't beat** Jack.

Could (do) and could have (done)

A

We use **could** in a number of ways. Sometimes **could** is the past of **can** (see Unit 26):

- Listen. I **can** hear something. (*now*)
- I listened. I **could** hear something. (*past*)

But **could** is not only used in this way. We also use **could** to talk about possible actions now or in the future (especially to make suggestions). For example:

- A: What shall we do tonight?
B: We **could** go to the cinema.
- A: When you go to Paris next month, you **could** stay with Sarah.
B: Yes, I suppose I **could**.

What shall we do tonight?

We **could** go to the cinema.



Can is also possible in these sentences ('We **can** go to the cinema.' etc.). **Could** is less sure than **can**.

B

We also use **could** (*not can*) for actions that are not realistic. For example:

- I'm so tired, I **could** sleep for a week. (*not I can sleep for a week*)

Compare **can** and **could**:

- I **can** stay with Sarah when I go to Paris. (*realistic*)
- Maybe I **could** stay with Sarah when I go to Paris. (*possible, but less sure*)
- This is a wonderful place. I **could** stay here for ever. (*unrealistic*)

C

We also use **could** (*not can*) to say that something (a situation or a happening) is possible now or in the future. The meaning is similar to **might** or **may** (see Unit 29):

- The story **could** be true, but I don't think it is. (*not can be true*)
- I don't know what time Lisa is coming. She **could** get here at any time.

Compare **can** and **could**:

- The weather **can** change very quickly in the mountains. (*in general*)
- The weather is nice now, but it **could** change. (*the weather now, not in general*)

D

We use **could have** (*done*) to talk about the past. Compare:

- I'm so tired, I **could** sleep for a week. (*now*)
I was so tired, I **could have** slept for a week. (*past*)
- The situation is bad, but it **could** be worse. (*now*)
The situation was bad, but it **could have been** worse. (*past*)

Something **could have** happened = it was possible but did not happen:

- Why did you stay at a hotel when you were in Paris? You **could have stayed** with Sarah. (*you didn't stay with her*)
- David was lucky. He **could have hurt** himself when he fell, but he's OK.

E

We use **couldn't** to say that something would not be possible:

- I **couldn't** live in a big city. I'd hate it. (= it wouldn't be possible for me)
- Everything is fine right now. Things **couldn't** be better.

For the past we use **couldn't have** (*done*):

- We had a really good holiday. It **couldn't have been** better.
- The trip was cancelled last week. Paul **couldn't have gone** anyway because he was ill. (= it would not have been possible for him to go)

Must and can't

A

Study this example:



You can use **must** to say that you believe something is certain:

- You've been travelling all day. You **must be** tired. (Travelling is tiring and you've been travelling all day, so you **must** be tired.)
- 'Joe is a hard worker.' 'Joe? You **must be** joking. He doesn't do anything.'
- Louise **must get** very bored in her job. She does the same thing every day.
- I'm sure Sally gave me her address. I **must have** it somewhere.

You can use **can't** to say that you believe something is not possible:

- You've just had lunch. You **can't be** hungry already. (People are not normally hungry just after eating a meal. You've just eaten, so you **can't** be hungry.)
- They haven't lived here for very long. They **can't know** many people.

Study the structure:

I/you/he (etc.)	must can't	be (tired / hungry / at work etc.) be (doing / going / joking etc.) do / get / know / have etc.
-----------------	-----------------------------	--

B

For the past we use **must have (done)** and **can't have (done)**.

Study this example:



- 'We used to live very near the motorway.' 'Did you? It **must have been** noisy.'
- 'I've lost one of my gloves.' 'You **must have dropped** it somewhere.'
- Sarah hasn't contacted me. She **can't have got** my message.
- Tom walked into a wall. He **can't have been looking** where he was going.

Study the structure:

I/you/he (etc.)	must can't	have	been (asleep / at work etc.) been (doing / looking etc.) gone / got / known etc.
-----------------	-----------------------------	-------------	---

You can use **couldn't have** instead of **can't have**:

- Sarah **couldn't have got** my message.
- Tom **couldn't have been looking** where he was going.

May and might 1

A

Study this example situation:

You are looking for Ben. Nobody is sure where he is, but you get some suggestions.

Where's Ben?

He **may be** in his office. (= perhaps he is in his office)

He **might be** having lunch. (= perhaps he is having lunch)

Ask Ann. She **might know**. (= perhaps she knows)

We use **may** or **might** to say that something is possible. Usually you can use **may** or **might**, so you can say:

- It **may** be true. or It **might** be true. (= perhaps it is true)
- She **might** know. or She **may** know.

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

- It **may not** be true. (= perhaps it isn't true)
- She **might not** work here any more. (= perhaps she doesn't work here)

Study the structure:

I/you/he (etc.)	may might	(not)	be (true / in his office etc.) be (doing / working / having etc.) know / work / want etc.
-----------------	----------------------------	-------	--

B

For the past we use **may have (done)** or **might have (done)**:

- A: I wonder why Kate didn't answer her phone.
B: She **may have been** asleep. (= perhaps she was asleep)
- A: I can't find my phone anywhere.
B: You **might have left** it at work. (= perhaps you left it at work)
- A: Why wasn't Amy at the meeting yesterday?
B: She **might not have known** about it. (= perhaps she didn't know)
- A: I wonder why David was in such a bad mood yesterday.
B: He **may not have been feeling** well. (= perhaps he wasn't feeling well)

Study the structure:

I/you/he (etc.)	may might	(not) have	been (asleep / at home etc.) been (doing / working / feeling etc.) known / had / wanted / left etc.
-----------------	----------------------------	------------	--

C

Could is similar to **may** and **might**:

- It's a strange story, but it **could be** true. (= it is possible that it's true)
- You **could have left** your phone at work. (= it's possible that you left it there)

But **couldn't** (*negative*) is different from **may not** and **might not**. Compare:

- Sarah **couldn't have** got my message. Otherwise she would have replied.
(= it is not possible that she got my message)
- I wonder why Sarah hasn't replied to my message. I suppose she **might not have** got it.
(= it's possible that she didn't get it – so perhaps she did, perhaps she didn't)

Exercises

30.1 Write sentences with **might**.

- Where are you going for your holidays? (to Ireland???)
I haven't decided yet. I might go to Ireland.
- What sort of car are you going to buy? (a Honda???)
I'm not sure yet. I _____.
- When is Tom coming to see us? (on Saturday???)
He hasn't said yet. _____.
- Where are you going to hang that picture? (in the dining room???)
I haven't made up my mind yet. _____.
- What is Tanya going to do when she leaves school? (go to university???)
She's still thinking about it. _____.

30.2 Complete the sentences using **might** + the following:

bite break need rain slip wake

- Take an umbrella with you when you go out. It might rain later.
- Don't make too much noise. You _____ the baby.
- Be careful of that dog. It _____ you.
- Don't throw that letter away. We _____ it later.
- Be careful. The footpath is very icy. You _____.
- Don't let the children play in this room. They _____ something.

30.3 Complete the sentences. Use **might be able to** or **might have to** + one of the following:

fix help leave meet sell work

- Tell me about your problem. I might be able to help _____ you.
- I'm not free this evening, but I _____ you tomorrow.
- I don't know if I'll be free on Sunday. I _____.
- I can come to the meeting, but I _____ before the end.
- I'm short of money. I want to keep my car, but I _____ it.
- A: There's something wrong with my bike.
B: Let me have a look. I _____ it.

30.4 Write sentences with **might not**.

- I'm not sure that Liz will come to the party.
Liz might not come to the party.
- I'm not sure that I'll go out this evening.
I _____.
- I'm not sure that we'll be able to get tickets for the game.
We _____.
- I'm not sure that Sam will be able to go out with us tonight.
_____.

30.5 Read the situations and make sentences with **might as well**.

- You and a friend have just missed the bus. The buses run every hour.
You say: We'll have to wait an hour for the next bus. We might as well walk.
- You've been invited to a party. You're not very excited about it, but you decide to go.
You say: I'm not doing anything else, so I _____ to the party.
- You've just painted your kitchen. You still have a lot of paint, so why not paint the bathroom too?
You say: We _____ . There's plenty of paint left.
- You and a friend are at home. You're bored. There's a film on TV starting in a few minutes.
You say: _____ . There's nothing else to do.