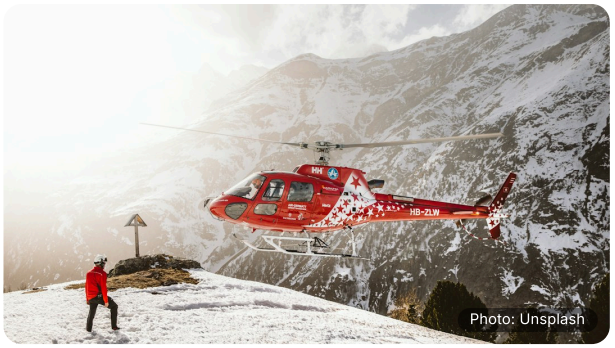
Yamanashi plans rescue fees on Fuji

LEVEL B1


Photo: Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. Have you ever hiked a mountain? Where was it?
2. What risks should hikers think about before a trip?
3. When is the best season to climb in your country? Why?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

prefecture
An area of local government in Japan, similar to a region or county.

off-season
A time when an activity usually stops or is not officially open.

deter
To make someone decide not to do something by warning of bad results.

reckless
Not careful about risk; doing something dangerous without thinking.

register
To record your details officially for an activity or service.

penalty
A punishment, often a fine, for breaking a rule or law.

stranded
Left in a place without a way to leave or get help.

severe
Very serious or extreme, especially about weather or conditions.

III. READING

From next year, Japan's Yamanashi prefecture will charge a rescue fee for people who climb Mount Fuji during the off-season and then need a helicopter. The plan aims to deter reckless and poorly prepared hikers.

Yamanashi will also require off-season climbers, from early September to July the following year, to submit detailed plans. Governor Kotaro Nagasaki said the public should rethink winter attempts. Officials report more off-season and unplanned climbs, and some people have been left stranded.

Neighbouring Shizuoka prefecture, which governs Fuji's southern side, will impose a penalty on people who fail to register off-season climbs and will strengthen efforts to keep climbers out of restricted areas. It did not announce a helicopter fee.

Fuji's official season runs from July to early September, and about 200,000 hikers attempt the summit each year. Outside those months, most huts and toilets are closed, weather and trails are more severe, and climbing is only permitted up to the fifth station.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News***: "Lost on Mount Fuji off-season? You'll have to...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who will have to pay a rescue fee on Mount Fuji?
2. What does Governor Kotaro Nagasaki ask the public to do?
3. What must off-season climbers submit in Yamanashi?
4. What will Shizuoka do about off-season climbs?
5. When is the official season, and how many try the summit each year?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Should off-season climbers pay for helicopter rescues? Why or why not?
2. What safety rules might reduce reckless climbs on mountains?
3. Have you ever changed plans because conditions looked severe?
4. How could tourism and safety both be protected on popular peaks?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

May / might (probability)

Use may or might to say something is possible now or in the future. Both are correct for possibility and are often interchangeable.

*"Off-season climbers **might be** stranded without huts."*
*"Rescues **may take** longer in bad weather."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

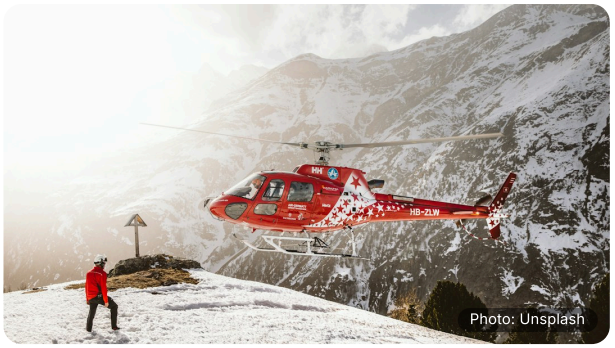
Complete each sentence with may or might + the verb.

1. From next year climbers (pay) ___ a rescue fee if rescued. _____
2. Off-season trails are severe, so hikers (be) ___ at risk. _____
3. Climbers who do not register (face) ___ a penalty. _____
4. Bad weather (delay) ___ rescue helicopters. _____
5. The new fee (deter) ___ some hikers from climbing in winter. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Unsplash

I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 12–15 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach place names (Yamanashi, Shizuoka) and explain prefecture, off-season, register, penalty, severe.
- Run a first skim read for the main idea, then a second read to find details (dates, numbers, actions). Pair-check answers before whole-class feedback.
- For discussion, use small groups and assign roles (tourist, guide, official) to balance views and keep the focus on safety rather than personal risk-taking stories.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a quick show of hands, then pair students with different views to exchange reasons.
2. Elicit a list of concrete rules first, then ask groups to choose the three most useful.
3. Model a short story yourself, including what sign or forecast warned you, then invite pairs to share.
4. Split the class: half propose ways to protect tourists, half protect nature; then combine ideas.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Debate: In two teams, write and deliver a two-minute case for or against off-season rescue fees.

Writing: In pairs, write a 70-word safety notice for off-season visitors to Mount Fuji.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

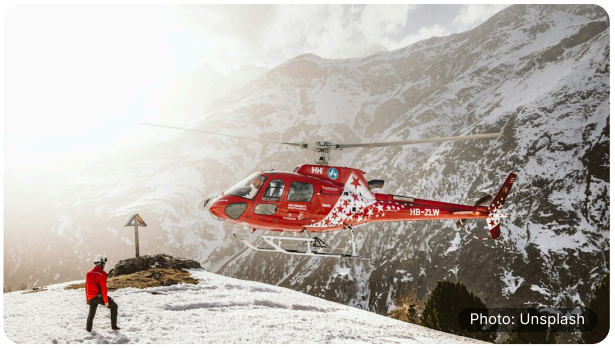
Grammar exercise: May / might (probability)

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

TEACHERS ONLY

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Unsplash

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who will have to pay a rescue fee on Mount Fuji?
   Off-season climbers in Yamanashi who need a helicopter rescue.
2. What does Governor Kotaro Nagasaki ask the public to do?
   Rethink winter attempts and avoid off-season climbs.
3. What must off-season climbers submit in Yamanashi?
   Detailed climbing plans.
4. What will Shizuoka do about off-season climbs?
   Impose penalties for not registering and strengthen efforts to keep climbers out of restricted areas.
5. When is the official season, and how many try the summit each year?
   From July to early September; about 200,000 hikers.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with may or might + the verb.

1. From next year climbers ___ a rescue fee if rescued. **may/might pay**
2. Off-season trails are severe, so hikers ___ at risk. **may/might be**
3. Climbers who do not register ___ a penalty. **may/might face**
4. Bad weather ___ rescue helicopters. **may/might delay**
5. The new fee ___ some hikers from climbing in winter. **may/might deter**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use may or might to say something is possible now or in the future. Both are correct for possibility and are often interchangeable. (Examples constructed.)

> *"Off-season climbers* **might be** *stranded without huts."*
>
> *"Rescues* **may take** *longer in bad weather."*