

Can, could, may, might, to be able to



Ability (способность что-либо делать)

Can

Could

To be able to



Peter **can** read but his sister, Rose, **can't**.

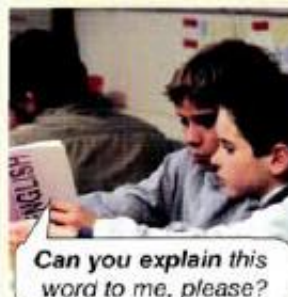


Can / Could (разрешение, просьба)

♦ ask for permission. Could is more formal and polite than can.



♦ make a request. Could is more polite than can.



Must/ Can't (предположение)



May / Might

Possibility

- It **might** rain later so take an umbrella.

Express wishes

- **May** the New Year bring you happiness.

Give permission

- You **may** have another cookie if you like.

Ask for permission

- **May** I borrow your pen please?

Comparative study of possibility

Modal

Must
May
Might
Can't

Possibility

99%
50-80%
20-40%
0%

May/Might I...? = Would you mind if I ...?

We use these structures to ask permission when we do not know the other person very well.



Study the following examples:

e.g. **'Can I take this book?'**

'Yes, of course.' (informal)

'Could I talk to you for a minute?'

'Certainly.' (more polite than can)

Exercise 1

Fill in the gaps with the correct answer *can/ can't, could/ couldn't or was/ were able to*

- 1) When I arrived, I _____ see a few people waiting for the train.
a) can b) could c) was able to
- 2) Sam _____ speak Italian fluently, can't he?
a) can b) could c) was able to
- 3) _____ tie your shoelaces when you were four years old?
a) can b) could c) was able to
- 4) It was a very tricky question, but Tom _____ answer it.
a) can b) could c) was able to
- 5) I _____ hear what they were saying because the music was too loud.
a) can't b) couldn't c) was able to
- 6) Although it was difficult, the children _____ build a tree house.
a) can b) couldn't c) were able to
- 7) I _____ understand what he was saying because he was speaking Spanish.
a) can't b) couldn't c) can
- 8) Steven _____ walk when he was one year old.
a) can b) could c) can't
- 9) The door was locked so I _____ go inside.
a) can b) could c) wasn't able to
- 10) I _____ run faster than my brother now.
a) can b) could c) was able to

Exercise 2

Choose the correct answer

- 1) Look at that man in the beautiful car. He _____ be very rich. a) must b) can't
- 2) Aunt Sheila's dog died. She _____ be very sad. a) must b) can't
- 3) That woman always wears smart clothes and lots of jewellery. She _____ be poor.
a) must b) can't
- 4) You've been working all day without a break. You _____ be really tired.
a) must b) can't
- 5) I've finished tidying my room. – You _____ be ready so soon! You only started ten minutes ago! a) must b) can't

Exercise 3

Complete the sentences using *might* + the verbs

bite break need rain slip wake

- 1) Take an umbrella with you when you go out. It might _____ later.
- 2) Don't make too much noise. You might _____ the baby.

- 3) Beware of that dog. It might _____ you.
- 4) I don't think we should throw that letter away. We might _____ it later.
- 5) Be careful. The footpath is very icy. You might _____.
- 6) Don't let the children play in this room. They might _____ something.

Exercise 4

Transform the sentences using *might not*

- 1) I'm not sure that Liz will come to the party.
Liz _____.
- 2) I'm not sure that I'll go out this evening.
I _____.
- 3) I'm not sure that we'll get tickets for the concert.
We _____.
- 4) I'm not sure that Alice will be able to come round this weekend.
Alice _____.

Exercise 5

Choose the correct respond

- 1) Could I speak to you for a moment, please?
a) Yes, of course. b) No, you couldn't
- 2) Shall I carry that bag for you?
a) No, you won't b) No, it's okay. I can manage.
- 3) Could I go to the cinema tonight?
a) Not at all b) Yes, if you like
- 4) We could go to the cinema tonight.
a) That's a nice idea b) No, we might not
- 5) Can I borrow your pen, please?
a) Not at all b) Of course
- 6) Can you pick the children up from school?
a) No, I may not b) No problem
- 7) Would you please drive me to the airport tomorrow?
a) I'd be happy to b) Yes, I would
- 8) Can I help you, sir?
a) No, you can't b) No, thank you. I'm just looking
- 9) Could you hold this for me, please?
a) Yes, I could b) Yes, sure

Exercise 6

Translate the sentences

- 1) Не могли бы Вы мне помочь?
- 2) Когда я был ребенком, я умел кататься на велосипеде.

- 3) Должно быть он на работе.
- 4) Можно ли открыть эту коробку конфет?
- 5) Я слышал по радио, что завтра, возможно, будет сильный дождь.
- 6) Нам удалось переплыть эту реку.