Can/can't

"**Can**" is a modal verb used to express **ability**, **capability**, **permission**, or **possibility**. It is used to talk about someone's general or specific ability to do something.

Here are some key points about the usage of "**can**":

Positive Form: The positive form of "**can**" is used to express that someone has the ability or capacity to do something. The basic structure is: Subject + "can" + base form of the verb.

Example:

- She **can** swim. (She has the ability to swim.)

Negative Form: The negative form of "**can**" is formed by adding "**not**" after "**can**." Alternatively, "**cannot**" can be used as a single word instead of "**can't**." The structure is: Subject + "can't" (or "cannot") + base form of the verb.

Example:

- He **can't** speak French. (He does not have the ability to speak French.)

Question Form: In question form, "**can**" is placed before the subject. The structure is: "Can" + subject + base form of the verb + ?.

Example:

- **Can** you play the guitar? (Do you have the ability to play the guitar?)

Possibility and Permission: "**Can**" can also be used to express possibility or permission. In these cases, it does not refer to ability but indicates what is allowed or what is likely to happen.

Example 1 **(possibility):**

- It **can** rain later today. (It is possible that it will rain later today).

Example 2 **(permission):**

- **Can** I come to the party? (May I come to the party?)



Note:

"can" is used for the present and future tense, but not for the past tense. In the past tense, "could" is used instead.

Can/can't exercise 1:

Amy and Julia are discussing things they can and can't do. Complete the conversation with the correct answers.



1.
Amy: _____ you swim?
Julia: Yes, I _____ swim.
a) Can / can
b) Can / can't
c) Can't / can
d) Can't / can't

2.
Amy: That's great! _____ you play the guitar?
Julia: No, I _____.
a) Can / can
b) Can / can't
c) Can't / can't
d) Can't / can

3.
Amy: I _____ cook very well.
Julia: That's okay, I _____ cook either.
a) Can't / can
b) Can / can
c) Can / can't
d) Can't / can't

4.
Amy: _____ you solve puzzles?
Julia: No, I _____.
a) Can / can
b) Can't / can
c) Can / can't
d) Can't / can't

5.
Amy: _____ you play video games?
Julia: Yes, I _____.
a) Can / can
b) Can / can't
c) Can't / can
d) Can't / can't



6.
Amy: That's cool! I _____ play video games, but I _____ play board games.
a) Can / can't
b) Can / can
c) Can't / can
d) Can't / can't

7.
Amy: _____ you speak any foreign languages?
Julia: Yes, I _____ speak Spanish.
a) Can't / can't
b) Can / can't
c) Can't / can
d) Can / can

8.
Amy: Cool!_____ you do magic tricks?
Julia: No, I _____.
a) Can / can't
b) Can / can
c) Can't / can
d) Can't / can't

9.
Amy: _____ you whistle?
Julia: No, I _____.
a) Can / can
b) Can't / can't
c) Can / can't
d) Can't / can

10.
Amy: _____ you ride a horse?
Julia: Yes, I _____. It's my favourite hobby.
a) Can / can't
b) Can / can
c) Can't / can
d) Can't / can't



Can and can't: answer key

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Where two or more answers are given, any of them is correct.

Exercise 1

1. a) Can / can
2. b) Can / can't
3. d) Can't / can't
4. c) Can / can't
5. a) Can / can
6. c) Can't / can
7. d) Can / can
8. a) Can / can't
9. c) Can / can't
10. b) Can / can