

CAN AND COULD

A2-B1 | Practise ability, permission and polite requests

1 Choose can or could.

can | could | could not = couldn't

For ability, use can now and could in the past. In 7, add could before not.

2 Complete the sentences.

1. When I was six, I _____ swim very well.
2. My sister _____ speak three languages now.
3. We _____ see the mountains from our hotel last year.
4. I _____ help you with your homework after dinner.
5. My grandfather _____ run ten kilometres when he was younger.
6. You _____ buy tickets online for the concert.
7. The baby _____ not walk last year.
8. Our teacher _____ explain the answer again.

3 Complete the polite questions.

Could is usually more polite than can.

9. you _____ repeat that, please?
10. I _____ use your phone for a moment?
11. you _____ help me carry this box?
12. we _____ sit here?
13. you _____ send me the address, please?
14. I _____ ask a question?

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A2-B1 | Write your own examples

4 Write three sentences.

Use the prompt and model beginning. Your answers will be different.

Write one complete sentence for each prompt.

15. Write one sentence about something you can do well.

I can ...

16. Write one sentence about something you could do when you were younger.

When I was younger, I could ...

17. Write one polite request using could.

Could you ... ?

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A2-B1 | Teacher answer key

1 Suggested answers

Answers for sections 1-3 are shown below. Writing answers will vary.

7: could before not; could not = couldn't. Accept can / could in 9–14.

2 Complete the sentences

1. When I was six, I **could** swim very well.
2. My sister **can** speak three languages now.
3. We **could** see the mountains from our hotel last year.
4. I **can** help you with your homework after dinner.
5. My grandfather **could** run ten kilometres when he was younger.
6. You **can** buy tickets online for the concert.
7. The baby **couldn't** walk last year.
8. Our teacher **can** explain the answer again.

3 Complete the polite questions

9. **Could** you repeat that, please?
10. **Can** I use your phone for a moment?
11. **Could** you help me carry this box?
12. **Can** we sit here?
13. **Could** you send me the address, please?
14. **Can** I ask a question?