



MINI LESSON 12: THE VERB “CAN” (ABILITY & PERMISSION)

Objective

Learn how to use the modal verb **can** to express **ability** and **permission** in everyday situations.

Explanation

CAN = Ability

We use **can** to talk about what someone **is able to do**.


- I **can swim**.
- She **can speak** three languages.
- They **can play** the guitar.

CAN = Permission

We also use **can** to ask for or give **permission**.

- **Can I go** to the bathroom?
- You **can borrow** my book.
- **Can we eat** in this room?

Important Notes:

- The base form of the verb always follows **can** (no *to* or *-s*):
 - He can **drive**. ()



- He can **drives**. (X)

- For the negative, use **can't** or **cannot**.

Examples

Ability

- I can dance.
- He can't cook.
- We can run fast.

Permission

- Can I open the window?
- Yes, you can.
- No, you can't.

Practice 1: Ability or Permission?

Write **A** for Ability or **P** for Permission.

1. Can I use your phone? → ____
2. She can play the violin. → ____
3. Can we go outside? → ____
4. They can speak Spanish. → ____



5. He can't swim. → ____

6. Can I sit here? → ____



Practice 2: Fill in the Blank

Use **can** or **can't**.

1. I _____ cook Italian food.
2. _____ you help me with this exercise?
3. Sorry, I _____ come to the party.
4. We _____ go to the museum tomorrow.
5. He _____ play the piano very well.
6. You _____ park here. It's allowed.



Practice 3: Make Questions and Answers

Example: (he / play tennis?)

→ **Can he play tennis?**

→ Yes, he can. / No, he can't.

1. (they / speak English?)

→ _____
→ _____

2. (I / go to the bathroom?)

→ _____
→ _____



3. (she / drive a car?)

→ _____
→ _____

4. (we / leave early?)

→ _____
→ _____

5. (you / cook?)

→ _____
→ _____

6. (he / come with us?)

→ _____
→ _____

Final Task

Write **five sentences** using **can** and **can't** — three for ability and two for permission.
Try to include a **question**, a **positive** sentence, and a **negative** sentence.

Answer Key

Practice 1

1. P
2. A
3. P
4. A
5. A



6. P

Practice 2

1. can
2. Can
3. can't
4. can
5. can
6. can

Practice 3 (answers will vary)

1. Can they speak English? → Yes, they can. / No, they can't.
2. Can I go to the bathroom? → Yes, you can. / No, you can't.
3. Can she drive a car? → Yes, she can. / No, she can't.
4. Can we leave early? → Yes, we can. / No, we can't.
5. Can you cook? → Yes, I can. / No, I can't.
6. Can he come with us? → Yes, he can. / No, he can't.