

CAN: USES

(Modal Verb)

ABILITY

To be able to:

- *Can you drive?*
- *She can speak four languages.*
- *Can you read that sign from this distance?*
- *The doctors are doing all that they can, but she's still not breathing properly.*
- *Do the best you can - I realize the circumstances are not ideal.*
- *If the party is awful, we can **always** leave (= that would be one possible solution to our problem).*
- *"She's really furious about it." "Can you blame her (= I'm not surprised)?"*

Can do (US INFORMAL)

Used to say that you can and will do something:

- *"Will you mail this letter for me, please?" "Can do."*
- *"I need you to pick up the kids today." "Sorry, no can do (= no I can't)."*

PERMISSION

To be allowed to:

- *If you finish early you can go home.*
- *She can come whenever she likes, as far as I'm concerned.*
- *Finish up your dinner and you can have dessert.*
- *How early can you get off this afternoon?*
- *Anyone can go - you don't have to be invited.*

Sometimes used to tell someone angrily to do something (INFORMAL):

- *If you carry on being horrible to your sister, Sophie, you can just go to bed!*

REQUEST

Used to request something:

- *If you see Brett, can you tell him I'm in town next weekend?*
- *Can you make a little less noise, please? I'm trying to work.*

POSSIBILITY

Used to express possibility:

- *You can get stamps from the local newsagents.*
- *You can get very nasty skin diseases from bathing in dirty water.*
- *Smoking can cause cancer.*
- *Noise can be quite a problem when you're living in a flat.*
- *He can be really annoying at times (= he is sometimes very annoying).*

OFFER

Used in polite offers of help:

- *Can I help you with those bags?*
- *I'm afraid Ms Ferguson has already left the office. Can I be of any help?*

CAN: FORM

(Modal Verb)

AFFIRMATIVE FORM:

Can comes first in the verb phrase (after the subject and before another verb):

- *We [verb phrase] **can** take the train to Birmingham.*

Can is never used with another modal verb:

- *He **can** hear the music from his room sometimes.*
 - ~~Not: He can might hear the music ... or He might can might hear the music ...~~

NEGATIVE FORM:

Equipe English Evolution

The negative form of *can* is *can't*. We don't use *don't/doesn't/didn't* with *can*:

- *I can't believe you said that!*
 - Not: ~~I don't can believe you said that!~~

We can use the full form *cannot* (one word) in formal contexts or when we want to emphasise something:

- *I cannot understand why she behaves like that.*

QUESTION FORM:

Warning:

The subject and *can* change position to form questions. We don't use *do/does/did*:

- *Can this really be true?*
 - Not: ~~Does this can really be true?~~
- *Can't you ask for another day off work?*

We use *can* and *can't* in question tags:

- *You can't take photos inside the museum, can you?*
- *Abby can speak Japanese, can't she?*

Material extraído do site:
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/can?q=Can>