

## Modal Verbs 1 – Ability, Possibility, Permission – Exercise Sheet 1 - ANSWERS

### Exercise 1: Fill in the Gaps – Ability, Possibility, and Permission (Answers & Explanations)

1. She **can** swim very well, but she wants to improve. ✓ (Present ability – "can" is used to describe general skills.)
2. I **might** come to your party, but I'm not sure yet. ✓ (Future possibility – "might" expresses uncertainty.)
3. When I was a child, I **could** run very fast. ✓ (Past ability – "could" is used to describe past skills.)
4. You **may** not enter this area without a special pass. ✓ (Formal permission – "may" is often used for rules.)
5. We **might** be late for the meeting if we don't leave now. ✓ (Possibility – "might" expresses something uncertain but possible.)
6. He **was able to** fix the car after trying for hours. ✓ (Past ability in a specific situation – "was able to" is used instead of "could.")
7. **May** I borrow your pen, please? ✓ (Formal request – "may" is more polite than "can.")
8. I'm sorry, but I **may not** make it to your wedding. ✓ (Formal possibility – "may not" is used in more polite/formal contexts.)
9. He **could** be at work, or he might be at home. ✓ (Possibility – "could" suggests a neutral level of certainty.)
10. If you study hard, you **will be able to** pass the exam easily. ✓ (Future ability – "will be able to" is needed for the future tense.)

### Key Takeaways from Exercise 1

- "Can" is used for present ability, "could" for past ability.
  - "Might" and "could" express possibility, while "may" is more formal.
  - "Was able to" is used for a specific past event, not general abilities.
  - "Will be able to" is used for future abilities.
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## Exercise 2: Correct the Mistakes (Answers & Explanations)

1. ✗ **Do you can** help me with my homework?  
✓ **Can you** help me with my homework? (*Modals do not use "do" for questions.*)
2. ✗ When I was younger, I **was able to can** ride a bike.  
✓ When I was younger, I **could** ride a bike. (*Only one modal verb is needed.*)
3. ✗ I **mighn't** be able to finish the project in time.  
✓ I **might not** be able to finish the project in time. (*"Mighn't" is not commonly used in modern English.*)
4. ✗ **Could you borrow** me your phone for a second?  
✓ **Could you lend** me your phone for a second? (*"Borrow" means "take," so "lend" is the correct word here.*)
5. ✗ She **could not to attend** the meeting last week.  
✓ She **could not attend** the meeting last week. (*Modal verbs are followed by the base form of the verb.*)
6. ✗ It **mayn't** rain today, but bring an umbrella just in case.  
✓ It **may not** rain today, but bring an umbrella just in case. (*We don't contract "may not."*)
7. ✗ We **was able to** find a solution quickly.  
✓ We **were able to** find a solution quickly. (*"Was" should be "were" to match "we."*)
8. ✗ **Can I to ask** you a question?  
✓ **Can I ask** you a question? (*Modals do not use "to" before the verb.*)
9. ✗ He **couldn't win** the competition, so he was very disappointed.  
✓ **Correct!** (*No mistake here.*)
10. ✗ You **may** borrow my car if you want.  
✓ **Correct!** (*No mistake here.*)

## Key Takeaways from Exercise 2

- Modal verbs do not take "to" before the main verb.
- "Mightn't" and "mayn't" are incorrect – use "might not" and "may not" instead.
- "Could" expresses general past ability, while "was/were able to" is used for specific past events.
- "Borrow" and "lend" are often confused – we "borrow" from someone and "lend" to someone.