

Modal Verbs 1 – Ability, Possibility, Permission – Worksheet 2 – ANSWERS

Exercise 1: Choose the Correct Option (Answers & Explanations)

1. I **can** help you carry those bags if you like. (b) ✓
Explanation: "Can" is used here because it expresses **present ability**.
2. She **may** not come to the meeting because she's feeling sick. (a) ✓
Explanation: "May not" expresses a **formal or uncertain possibility** in the future.
3. When he was younger, he **could** speak three languages. (b) ✓
Explanation: "Could" is used for **general past ability** (something he was able to do in the past).
4. Excuse me, **may** I use your phone for a second? (b) ✓
Explanation: "May" is the most **formal and polite** way to ask for permission.
5. We **might** go to the cinema later, but we haven't decided yet. (a) ✓
Explanation: "Might" expresses **possibility** when a decision has not been made.
6. She **was able to** reach the top shelf, even though it was very high. (a) ✓
Explanation: "Was able to" is used instead of "could" because this is a **specific past event** where she succeeded.
7. **May** I ask you a question? (b) ✓
Explanation: "May" is preferred over "can" in formal situations when asking permission.
8. You **may** not enter the building after 10 p.m. (a) ✓
Explanation: "May not" expresses **prohibition** in a formal way.
9. They **can** win the competition if they train hard. (c) ✓
Explanation: "Can" is used because it refers to a **strong possibility or ability in the future**.
10. She **couldn't** open the door because she had lost the key. (a) ✓
Explanation: "Couldn't" is used for **past inability** (something she was unable to do).

Key Takeaways from Exercise 3

- ✓ "Can" expresses ability in the present or future.
 - ✓ "Could" is for general past ability, while "was able to" is for specific past situations.
 - ✓ "May" is more formal than "can" for permission and prohibition.
 - ✓ "Might" expresses possibility, but it is less certain than "can."
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Exercise 2: Rewrite the Sentences (Answers & Explanations)

1. **I am able to help** you with your homework. (Alternative to "can.") ✓
Explanation: "Be able to" is interchangeable with "can," but it is slightly more formal.
2. **I was able to climb** trees very easily when I was younger. (Alternative to "could.") ✓
Explanation: "Was able to" can replace "could" when referring to a **general past ability**.
3. **There is a chance that it will be cold tomorrow.** (Alternative to "might.") ✓
Explanation: "There is a chance" rephrases "might" as a **more descriptive way to express possibility**.
4. **May I have** a glass of water? (More formal than "Could I have.") ✓
Explanation: "May" is the **most polite** way to ask for something.
5. **She managed to fix** the computer. (Alternative to "was able to.") ✓
Explanation: "Managed to" is often used for **successful completion** of a specific task.
6. **It is possible that they are not at home right now.** (Alternative to "may not.") ✓
Explanation: "It is possible that..." is a more **formal way** to express possibility.
7. **Is it okay if I leave** work early today? (Alternative for permission.) ✓
Explanation: "Is it okay if..." is **less formal** than "may I," making it more suitable for casual situations.
8. **We might be late.** (Alternative for possibility.) ✓
Explanation: "Might" expresses **uncertainty** about being late.
9. **I couldn't answer** the phone. (Past inability.) ✓
Explanation: "Couldn't" is used because it refers to something that **was impossible at a specific time in the past**.
10. **You are allowed to use** a dictionary during the test. (Alternative to "may.") ✓
Explanation: "You are allowed to" is often used in **rules and regulations** instead of "may."

Key Takeaways from Exercise 4

- ✓ "Be able to" is interchangeable with "can" but works better in different tenses.
- ✓ "Managed to" is used for success in a specific situation.
- ✓ "Is it okay if..." is a casual way to ask permission.
- ✓ "There is a chance" and "It is possible that" can replace modal verbs for possibility.