**Al-Mustaqbal University College**

**College of Administrative Sciences**

**Department of Business Administration**

**English Language for 4th class**

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**Request and Offers**

Both can and could are modal verbs used in English to indicate ability, possibility, permission, or requests. However, they are used in different contexts, mainly differing in terms of tense, politeness, and sometimes probability.

**Uses of *Can***

I can swim very well –

I can’t play football –

he cannot speak Arabic –

she can’t move to London this year –

you can’t park your car here –

you can go out if you feel bored –

you can’t smoke in the bedroom –

can I have a cup of coffee please?-

can you leave me alone?

you can use my laptop if you want –

can I stay here tonight ?

**1. Ability (Present Ability)**

* *Can* is used to describe what someone is capable of doing right now or generally.
* **Examples**:
  + "I can swim."
  + "She can speak three languages."

**2. Possibility**

* *Can* also shows that something is possible in general or under certain conditions.
* **Examples**:
  + "The weather can be unpredictable in April."
  + "Eating too much sugar can cause health issues."

**3. Permission**

* *Can* is used informally to ask for and give permission, often in casual situations.
* **Examples**:
  + "Can I leave early today?"
  + "You can sit here if you want."

**4. Requests**

* *Can* is commonly used to make requests, though it is less polite than *could*.
* **Examples**:
  + "Can you help me with this?"
  + "Can I borrow your book?"

**Uses of *Could***

Jack wanted to me help him but I couldn’t –

I did it because I knew that i could –

could you pass the salt please? –

could I come with you ? –

could you help me please? –

I could help you if I had time, sorry –

or you say (of course I can help)

careful! it could be dangerous –

it could rain tomorrow –

the exam can be difficult

**1. Ability (Past Ability)**

* *Could* is the past form of *can* and is used to describe what someone was able to do in the past.
* **Examples**:
  + "When I was young, I could run very fast."
  + "She could read when she was just four."

**2. Possibility**

* *Could* is used to express a less certain or more hypothetical possibility than *can*.
* **Examples**:
  + "It could rain tomorrow."
  + "If we hurry, we could still catch the bus."

**3. Permission (Polite)**

* *Could* can be used to ask for permission politely, especially in formal settings.
* **Examples**:
  + "Could I leave a bit early today?"
  + "Could we schedule a meeting for tomorrow?"

**4. Requests (Polite)**

* *Could* is also used to make polite requests, often when we want to sound more courteous or formal.
* **Examples**:
  + "Could you pass the salt, please?"
  + "Could you explain that again?"

**Comparing *Can* and *Could***

1. **Tense**:
   * *Can* is used for the present or general truths.
   * *Could* is used for past abilities or more hypothetical situations in the present or future.
2. **Politeness**:
   * *Could* is generally more polite than *can* when making requests or asking for permission.
3. **Certainty**:
   * *Can* suggests a stronger possibility or capability, while *could* implies a lesser or hypothetical possibility.

**Practice Examples**

1. **Ability**:
   * Present: "She can drive a car."
   * Past: "He could ride a bike when he was a child."
2. **Possibility**:
   * Certain: "Driving fast can be dangerous."
   * Hypothetical: "It could be dangerous to drive fast in these conditions."
3. **Permission**:
   * Informal: "Can I use your pen?"
   * Polite: "Could I borrow your pen for a moment?"
4. **Request**:
   * Casual: "Can you open the window?"
   * Polite: "Could you open the window, please?"

**Conclusion**

*Can* and *could* are essential modal verbs that help us communicate ability, possibility, permission, and requests in English. Remember, *can* is more direct and often casual, while *could* is softer, more polite, and is also used for past abilities and hypothetical scenarios.