

## Modal Verbs of Ability and Permission Exercise

Check through the different uses.

TYPE	USE	MODAL VERBS	EXAMPLE
1	expressing ability	CAN	María can drive.
2	asking for permission	MAY, CAN, COULD	Could I borrow your pen?
3	giving permission	MAY, CAN	You can use my phone.
4	refusing permission, prohibition	CAN'T, MAY NOT	You may not talk in the exam
5	requests	CAN, COULD	Can you pass me the salt?

Look at the following phrases and write in which type you think it is. Then use one of the modal verbs in brackets to fill the gaps.

### TYPE

- 1  You (may/could)..... leave now if you wish.
- 2  (Could/May)..... you open the window a bit, please?
- 3  (May/Can)..... you play the piano?
- 4  Listen, please. You (may not/could not)..... speak during this exam.
- 5  You (can't/might not)..... smoke on the bus.
- 6  (Can't/May)..... I make a call on your mobile?
- 7  Do you know if Mark (can/may) ..... sing?
- 8  (Can't/May)..... I sit here, please?
- 9  Caroline, your friends (can/could)..... stay the night if they want to. They're perfectly welcome.
- 10  I'm sorry but you (can't/may)..... use the computer until after I've finished.
- 11  (May/Could)..... you lend me 40 Euros til Monday?
- 12  Listen, please. Students (may/could)..... study in the library from five to nine in the evening.

## Answers

- 1 TYPE 3 You may leave now if you wish.
- 2 TYPE 5 Could you open the window a bit, please?
- 3 TYPE 1 Can you play the piano?
- 4 TYPE 4 Listen, please. You may not speak during this exam.
- 5 TYPE 4 You may not smoke on the bus.
- 6 TYPE 2 May I make a call on your mobile?
- 7 TYPE 1 Do you know if Mark can sing?
- 8 TYPE 2 May I sit here, please?
- 9 TYPE 3 Caroline, your friends can stay the night if they want to. They're perfectly welcome.
- 10 TYPE 4 I'm sorry but you can't use the computer until after I've finished.
- 11 TYPE 5 Could you lend me 40 Euros til Monday?
- 12 TYPE 3 Listen, please. Students may study in the library from five to nine in the evening.