

Grammar Station

Modal Verbs: Can / May (Permission)

- We use **can** or **may** to give or ask for permission.
- The modal verbs **can** and **may** come **before the base verb**.
- May** is more formal than **can**. We don't use a short form for **may not**.

Positive			Negative		
Subject	Modal Verb	Base Verb	Subject	Modal Verb	Base Verb
I / You He / She / It We / They	can may	watch TV.	I / You He / She / It We / They	can't may not	watch TV.

Question			Answer	
Modal Verb	Subject	Base Verb	Yes	No
Can May	I	sit here?	Yes, you can/may . Sure. / Of course.	No, you can't/may not . Sorry, you can't .



You **can** use my phone.



You **may not** come in.



Can I drink the milk?
- Yes, you **can**.



May I take your picture?
- No, you **may not**.

Circle the correct words.

1. You ☒ **can** / ☐ **can't** sit down. 2. You ☐ **may** / ☒ **may not** read it.
3. You ☐ **can** / ☒ **can't** eat this. 4. You ☐ **may** / ☒ **may not** run.

A Circle the correct words.

1. You (☒ **can** / ☐ **cans**) go out. 2. You (☐ **can't** / ☐ **don't can**) run here.
3. You (☐ **may** / ☐ **mayn't**) sit here. 4. You (☐ **mays** / ☐ **may**) leave now.
5. You can (☐ **eats** / ☐ **eat**) the snacks. 6. You may (☐ **sit** / ☐ **sits**) on the sofa.
7. You (☐ **cannt** / ☐ **can't**) use the computer.
8. You (☐ **may not touch** / ☐ **may touch not**) the vase.

B Complete the sentences with **can** or **can't**.

1. You ☒ **can't** listen to music here. 2. You ☐ use the bathroom.
3. You ☐ sit on the bench. 4. You ☐ read the books.
5. You ☐ borrow my umbrella. 6. You ☒ wear my new coat.

C Check the correct answers.

1. Can I sit here? ☒ Yes, you can. ☐ Yes, you can't.
2. May I play outside? ☐ No, you may. ☐ No, you may not.
3. Can I take a break? ☐ Yes, you can. ☐ Yes, you may not.
4. May I open the door? ☐ No, you can't. ☐ No, you can.
5. Can I use your scissors? ☐ Yes, you may not. ☐ No, you may not.

A Complete the sentences.

-  (may / jump)
You may not jump in the elevator.
-  (can / open)
You _____ the window.
-  (may / speak)
You _____ loudly.
-  (can / use)
You _____ my pencil.

B Match the questions with the correct answers.

- May I go now? • Sure, come in and take a seat.
- Can I swim here? • Yes. What is your question?
- Can I use your phone? • Of course. Here you are.
- May I come in? • Sure. See you tomorrow.
- Can I ask a question? • No, you can't. It's too deep.

C Correct the underlined words and rewrite the sentences.

- You use can my smartphone. → You can use my smartphone.
- You mayn't touch this painting. → _____
- You brings may your pet. → _____
- Can I borrow your scarf? → _____
- May uses your computer? → _____

Complete the comic strip dialogue using *can* or *may*.

Review!

Complete the chart.

Positive	Negative	Question
You can eat snacks.	You <u>can't eat</u> snacks.	<u>Can I eat</u> snacks?
You can go home.	You _____ home.	_____ home?
You may sit here.	You _____ here.	_____ here?
You may watch TV.	You _____ TV.	_____ TV?