

Asking for permission	Giving (✓) and refusing (X) permission	Notes
Is it OK if I leave now?	✓ Yes, that's fine. / ✓ Yes, of course.	
Is it a problem if I leave now?	✓ No, go ahead.	
Is it all right if I <u>leave</u> early?	✓ Yes, of course.	Notice that after <i>would</i> , the <i>if</i> -clause is in the past tense.
Would it be all right if I <u>left</u> early?*	X I'm afraid not. I need you here. **	
Can/Could I possibly leave my coat here?	✓ Yes, feel free. / ✓ Yes, of course.	Could and might are more polite/formal than can. Feel free is an informal response.
May I leave my coat here?	X I'm afraid not. I have to lock the door. **	
Do you mind if I <u>sit</u> here?	✓ No, go ahead.	Do/Would you mind if ...? means 'do you have a problem if ...?' Notice that after <i>would</i> , the <i>if</i> -clause is in the past tense.
Would you mind if I <u>sat</u> here?*	✓ No, that's fine.	
I wonder if I <u>could</u> use your mobile.	✓ Help yourself.	I wonder is a very polite request for permission, or for asking sb to do sth: I wonder if you could help me.
I was wondering if I <u>could</u> use your mobile.*	X I'm sorry, but I'm expecting a call. **	

The expressions for permission at the top of the table are less formal than the ones at the bottom.

* These requests for permission are a little more formal than the other request in the pair.

** With a negative response, we usually give a reason.

1 Rewrite the requests for permission in the correct order.

► a / the / open / window / may / I / bit ?

May I open the window a bit?

1 car / the / I / here / is / if / OK / it / park ?

2 took / if / all / be / would / it / car / right / I / the ?

3 wait / if / do / mind / you / I / here ?

4 I / ask / wonder / something / I / if / could / you

5 later / call / possibly / you / could / I / tonight ?

6 your / it / borrow / pencil / all / is / I / right / if ?

2 Complete the dialogues.

► I wonder if I could use your tablet for a minute. ~ Yes, of course.

1 _____ you mind if I borrowed this? ~ No, _____ fine.

2 Is it a _____ if I charge my phone here? ~ No, help _____.

3 Would it be all _____ if I gave my homework in late? ~ I'm _____, but I need it today.

4 Do you _____ if I turn the TV on? ~ No, _____ free!

5 I was _____ if I could borrow the car tonight. ~ I'm _____ not – I need it.

6 Could I _____ speak to Mrs Levington? ~ Yes, of _____. She's free now.

3 Write requests for permission and responses using the words given.

► You want to leave class early today. Use MIND in the question and FINE in the response.

(MIND) Do you mind if I leave class early today ? ~ (FINE) Yes, that's fine.

1 You want to borrow a friend's shopping bag.

(ALL RIGHT) _____ ? ~ (FREE) _____.

2 You want to switch the light on.

(OK) _____ ? ~ (AHEAD) _____.

3 You want to take a day off work on Friday.

(WONDER) _____ ~ (AFRAID) _____.

4 You want to look at someone's newspaper.

(WOULD) _____ ? ~ (YOURSELF) _____.



TEST YOURSELF