

CAN / COULD for ABILITIES

"Can" is used to talk about PRESENT ability or a general truth.

Structure: Subject + can + base verb

- She can swim very fast.
- I can speak three languages.
- They can play the guitar.

"Could" is used to talk about PAST ability.

Structure: Subject + could + base verb

- When I was a child, I could ride a bike.
- He could run 5 km when he was younger.
- We could understand her accent easily.

Notes:

- Use "can" for things people are able to do now or in general.
- Use "could" for things they were able to do in the past.

PART 1: Fill in the blanks with 'can' or 'could'

- When I was five, I ____ read simple books.
- She ____ speak Japanese fluently now.
- We ____ climb trees easily when we were kids.
- He ____ play the guitar really well these days.
- My grandmother ____ cook very well when she was younger.
- I ____ ride a bike, but I can't drive a car yet.
- They ____ understand the lesson last year.
- My little brother ____ draw amazing pictures!

PART 2: Choose the correct answer

- (Can / Could) you swim when you were 7?
- I (can / could) run faster than my brother now.
- He (can / could) read when he was only 4 years old.
- My parents (can / could) travel a lot before they had children.
- Anna (can / could) help us today, but not tomorrow.
- (Can / Could) she drive a car when she was 18?

PART 3: Fill in the blanks with can, can't, could, or couldn't.

Usain Bolt is one of the fastest runners in the world. When he was younger, he ____ run 100 meters in under 10 seconds. Even as a child, he ____ run faster than most adults. Now that he's retired, he ____ still run quickly, but he ____ compete professionally anymore.

Simone Biles is an American gymnast who ____ perform amazing flips and routines. When she was just 6 years old, she ____ already do somersaults! Most people ____ imagine doing what she does.

Lionel Messi is known as one of the greatest footballers of all time. As a teenager, he ____ already dribble past several defenders with ease. At first, some people thought he ____ succeed because of his small size, but he proved them wrong. Now, even in his mid-30s, he ____ still play at a top level, though he ____ run as fast as he did 10 years ago.

Thank you!