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

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 ?   <u>May I open the window a bit?</u>
- **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 <u>could</u> use your tablet for a minute. ~ Yes, <u>of</u> 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) <u>Do you mind if I leave class early today</u> ? ~ (FINE) <u>Yes, that's fine</u> .
- **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