

Complete the table using the words from the box. Words can be used more than once.

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|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------|
| WASN'T/WEREN'T ABLE TO | WILL BE ABLE TO | CAN | COULD |
| CAN'T | MANAGED TO | WON'T BE ABLE TO | |
| WAS/WERE ABLE TO | COULDN'T | DIDN'T MANAGE TO | |

TALKING ABOUT ABILITY

| Ability in the present | Ability in the past | Ability in the future |
|--|---|---|
| <p>We use CAN / CAN'T to talk about ability/lack of ability in the present.</p> <p>E.g: I can swim.</p> <p>I can't speak Chinese.</p> | <p>We use COULD, MANAGED TO AND WAS/WERE ABLE TO to talk about ability in the past.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To talk about LACK of ability on one occasion, we can use the negative form of ALL THREE VERBS. <p>E.g: I COULDN'T / MANAGED TO / WASN'T ABLE TO climb the mountain because it was too high.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To talk about general ability in the past, we usually use COULD. <p>E.g: Jessie COULD read before she went to school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To talk about general LACK of ability in the past, we usually use CAN'T. <p>E.g: This time last year, I CAN'T skate, but now I CAN!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To talk about specific ability on one occasion in the past, we use MANAGED TO. <p>E.g: The river was deep, but we MANAGED TO cross it.</p> | <p>We use CAN / CAN'T OR WILL / WON'T BE ABLE TO to talk about ability/lack of ability in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To talk about general ability in the future, we use CAN / CAN'T. <p>E.g: At the end of the course, you'll be able to make your own website.</p> <p>He won't be able to fly a plane in a week – it'll take months!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To talk about specific ability in the future, we use CAN / CAN'T + time expressions <p>E.g: I haven't got time now, but I can help you later.</p> <p>Sorry, but I can't come to your barbecue on Friday.</p> |

able to cross it.

- To talk about a particular achievement in the past that needed a lot of effort, we use
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E.g: She managed to win the championship.