

## 5.1 can, can't, could, couldn't

### can and can't

#### GR5.1a

- I **can** swim, but I **can't** ride a bicycle.
- You **can** visit the museum, but you **can't** visit the mine.

We use *can* and *can't* to talk about ability and possibility in the present.

#### Positive (+)

He **can** play tennis very well. (he knows how to do this.)  
People **can** buy clothes on the internet. (it's possible to do this.)

#### Negative (-)

We **can't** speak Russian. (we don't know how to do this.)  
You **can't** drive in the city centre. (it's not possible to do this.)

#### Questions

- A** **Can** your children ride bicycles?  
**B** Yes, they **can**. They cycle to school every day.
- A** **Can** I take a train to Muscat?  
**B** No, you **can't**. There aren't any trains in Oman.

### could and couldn't

#### GR5.1b

- He **could** write when he was five, but he **couldn't** read.
- A** **Could** people travel by underground in the 1840s?  
**B** No, they **couldn't**.

We use *could* and *couldn't* to talk about ability and possibility in the past.

#### Positive (+)

I **could** read when I was four years old. (I knew how to do this)  
People **could** buy things from machines in 1890. (it was possible to do this)

#### Negative (-)

When I was four years old, I **couldn't** swim. (I didn't know how to do this)  
In the 1880s, people **couldn't** fly to different countries. (it was not possible to do this)

#### Questions

- A** **Could** you write when you were eight years old?  
**B** Yes, I **could**. I could also play the violin.
- A** **Could** you buy food online in 1993?  
**B** No, you **couldn't**. But you could in 1997.

- After *can/could* we use the infinitive without *to*.  
You **can't buy** hot drinks online.  
NOT ~~You can't to buy hot drinks online.~~
- We don't add -s in the third person singular.  
She **can play** the piano.  
NOT ~~She cans plays~~
- We don't use *do/does* to make the question forms.  
**Can** you park in the city centre?  
NOT ~~Do you can park in the city centre?~~

- Complete the questions about ability and possibility and write the short answers.

- A** Can you swim in very cold water?  
**B** No, I can't.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ I drink the water in your country?  
**B** Yes, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ you carry this heavy bag?  
**B** No, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ you hear the traffic outside yesterday?  
**B** No, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ you cook when you were at university?  
**B** Yes, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ she draw well?  
**B** Yes, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ they answer this difficult question?  
**B** No, \_\_\_\_\_.
- A** \_\_\_\_\_ people fly to Antarctica in the 1920s?  
**B** No, \_\_\_\_\_.

- Complete the sentences with the correct form of *can/could* and the words in the box.

download not buy not live not play **send** swim use

- Could you send an email in 1990?
- In the 1980s, people \_\_\_\_\_ clothes online.
- These days, you \_\_\_\_\_ music onto your computer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ in the sea here? Is it safe?
- \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ euros in France in 1990?
- We \_\_\_\_\_ on Mars at the moment.
- In the 1980s, children \_\_\_\_\_ online games.

- Complete the conversation with the words in the box.

can can't could x4 **couldn't** pay talk travel

- Agata** Tell me about your life in the 1970s. Was it very different?
- Barb** In some ways, yes. There was no internet, so you <sup>1</sup> couldn't get information easily, but there were good libraries and I <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ borrow lots of books.
- Agata** <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you talk to your friends in other countries easily?
- Barb** I could <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ to them on the phone, but it was very expensive, so we usually wrote letters.
- Agata** Could you <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ to other countries on holiday?
- Barb** Yes, we <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, but travelling was also very expensive, so our family didn't often go on holiday.
- Agata** Well, it's not always cheap today, but sometimes you <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ find a cheap flight. What else was different?
- Barb** I <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ play outside all day with my friends. You <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ do that today because of the dangers.
- Agata** Could you <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ for things by credit card?
- Barb** Yes, but not in all shops. I usually paid in cash.

## 5.2 Present continuous

### GR5.2 )))

- 1 They're wearing hoodies.
- 2 She isn't waiting for Peter.
- 3 A Are you going to the wedding? B Yes, I am.
- 4 A What is he doing? B He's talking on the phone.

We form the present continuous with subject + to be + verb + -ing.

Positive (+)	Negative (-)	
I'm	I'm not	working today.
You're	You aren't	
He/She/It's	He/She/It isn't	
We/They're	We/They aren't	

yes/no questions (?)		Short answers	
Am I	reading?	Yes, I am.	No, I'm not.
Are you		Yes, you are.	No, you aren't.
Is he/she/it		Yes, he/she is.	No, he/she isn't.
Are we/they		Yes, we/they are.	No, we/they aren't.

### Wh- questions

To make a Wh- question we add a Wh- word before am/is/are.

Where are you going? Who are they talking to?

### Spelling rules

- Most verbs add -ing, e.g. wear → wearing.
- For verbs ending in -e, we drop the -e and add -ing, e.g. live → living.
- For verbs ending with one vowel + one consonant, we double the final consonant and add -ing. We don't double -x or -y.  
get → getting    begin → beginning    pay → paying

### Present continuous or present simple?

Present continuous	Present simple
I'm wearing a jacket today.	I often wear a jacket.
You aren't wearing shoes.	You never wear shoes at home.
He's working from home this week.	He doesn't usually work from home.

- We use the present continuous to talk about something happening at this moment or around now (today, this week).
- We use the present simple to talk about habits or routines, and things that happen all the time.

### What do you do? or What are you doing?

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| A What do you do?<br>(= What's your job?) | A What are you doing?<br>(= now?) |
| B I'm a dentist.                          | B I'm having lunch.               |

- 1 Complete the questions in the present simple or continuous and use the symbols (✓) or (X) to write positive or negative short answers.

- |                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 Are you wearing socks?       | ✓ Yes, I am. |
| 2 I sitting in your seat?      | X            |
| 3 they waiting?                | X            |
| 4 he usually drive carefully?  | ✓            |
| 5 you read the news every day? | X            |
| 6 she enjoying this lesson?    | ✓            |
| 7 we staying at this hotel?    | ✓            |
| 8 it raining?                  | X            |
| 9 penguins live in Antarctica? | ✓            |
| 10 he always speak quickly?    | ✓            |

- 2 Circle the correct option.

- 1 Elvira's wearing / wears a black skirt and designer shoes today.
- 2 The children are walking / walk to school every morning.
- 3 I'm working / work in Mumbai this month.
- 4 They aren't taking / don't take any photos today.
- 5 We're never playing / never play computer games.
- 6 'Why are you running / do you run?' 'I'm late!'
- 7 'How often are you watching / do you watch TV?' 'Every evening.'
- 8 'Is he having / Does he have a shower?' 'No, he's in bed.'
- 9 'Who's dancing / dances in the garden?' 'That's Ella. She's a very good dancer.'
- 10 'What's your brother doing / does your brother do?' 'He's an engineer.'
- 11 Come now! The film 's starting / starts.
- 12 Please talk quietly. The babies are sleeping / sleep.

- 3 Complete the conversation using the present simple or continuous of the verbs in (brackets).

- A Hi Mandy! How are you? What <sup>1</sup> are you doing (you do) here?
- B Hi Jakob! I'm fine. Good to see you. I <sup>2</sup> (visit) my sister. She <sup>3</sup> (live) here. I <sup>4</sup> (stay) with her for three days.
- A Oh nice! What <sup>5</sup> (your sister do)?
- B She's a dentist. She <sup>6</sup> (work) in the city centre. What about you? What <sup>7</sup> (you do) these days?
- A I <sup>8</sup> (learn) to fly. I want to be pilot.
- B Wow. That's great! Where <sup>9</sup> (you learn)?
- A In Aptex Training Centre, near the airport. Hey, do you have time for a coffee?
- B No, sorry, I <sup>10</sup> (wait) for my sister. She's in the bank. Look, that's her there. She <sup>11</sup> (wear) a red dress and <sup>12</sup> (talk) to the cashier.
- A OK, another time. Call me!