



# Chapter 12

## Modals, Part 1: Expressing Ability

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

**OBJECTIVE:** In this chapter, students learn to express ability. Students learn a variety of ways to express ability in both present and past tenses and recognize that a modal comes before the base form of the main verb (the infinitive form without *to*) but that other verb phrases include *to*. The objective is for students to recognize the common functions among various structures and to see for themselves that modals work in similar ways to other phrases.

**APPROACH:** The text first introduces *can* / *can't*. Through the use of very clear charts, it demonstrates that these modals are used immediately before the base form of the verb (the infinitive without *to*). The chapter stresses the critical importance of pronouncing *can* and *can't* and provides opportunities for students to listen for the differences in these modals. The text also provides an introduction to other verb phrases that show ability (*know how to* and *be able to*). Finally, the text presents *could* used to indicate a past ability. In addition, students learn how to use special phrases (*too \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_*) to describe situations that influence choices.

**TERMINOLOGY:** Again, grammar terminology is used only to support students' ready comprehension of the material further. This chapter introduces the term *modal* and offers an introduction to how modals, in general, function. The chapter focuses on what modals do rather than what words are modals. This functional approach, presented with minimal terminology, serves students' whole language needs well.

### ☐ EXERCISE 1. Warm-up. Page 361

Time: 5 minutes

As is common with target structures throughout the text, many beginners are likely to be very familiar with *can* / *can't*. This Warm-up is easily expandable as students enjoy talking about what they *can* do. Ask students additional questions about what they *can* and *can't* do to provide opportunities for all to participate.

- Read the direction line and have students circle which answers are true for them.
- Ask students to offer alternative sentences and write these on the board. For example:

*Joao can water-ski.*

*Mei-Chen can touch her tongue to her nose.*

*Akiko and Ahmed can walk on their hands.*

### CHART 12-1. Using *Can*. Page 361

Time: 10–15 minutes

Give students opportunities to say what they *can* do throughout the chart presentation.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Write a sentence highlighting one of your abilities and using *can* on the board.
- Underline the modal *can* and the base form of the verb that immediately follows it. For example:  
*I can run fast and far. I can run a marathon.*
- Stress that both possibility (opportunity) and ability are expressed by using *can*.
- Ask students to take turns reading example sentences (a)–(c).
- Emphasize that the base form of the verb (the infinitive without *to*) follows modals.
- Have students take turns reading example sentences (d)–(f) aloud. Ask them to point out the errors in (e) and (f).
- Remind students that as they improve their English, they will be able to hear mistakes as they read aloud.
- Have students read the various negative forms presented in example (g) aloud.
- Write additional sentences on the board, using your own or your students' lives to inform the negative structures. For example:

*I can not run 40 miles.*

*I cannot run 40 miles.*

*I can't run 40 miles.*

### ☐ EXERCISE 2. Let's talk. Page 362

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Put students into pairs.
- Model the examples with a student or students aloud and write examples showing both *can* and *can't* on the board.
- Demonstrate the correct pronunciation for both the positive and negative modals.
- Circulate while students work in pairs, helping students form sentences and correcting *can* / *can't* pronunciation.
- Correct by asking questions of individual students for each item. For example:

*Can a bird fly?*

*Yes, a bird can fly.*

□ **EXERCISE 3.** Let's talk: class activity.

Page 362

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Have a student read the direction line aloud.
- Give students a few minutes to make sentences about themselves from the cues given.
- Ask different students to respond to different items. Have more than one student give his or her sentence for the same item.
- Encourage those who can perform physical feats (for example, wiggle ears) to do so in class, in keeping with their levels of comfort.
- Ask students to present and discuss other unusual skills they may have.

□ **EXERCISE 4.** Game: small groups.

Page 363

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Have ready access to the correct answers.
- Ask a student to read the direction line aloud.
- Put students into groups and remind them to discuss each statement carefully to arrive at the correct response.
- After students have worked through each item, correct by asking one student to read each item aloud and ask each group to respond with *yes / no*.
- Keep score on the board and announce the winning group.

**Optional Vocabulary**

newborn  
float  
lift  
wiggle  
hold (their) breath

□ **EXERCISE 5.** Warm-up: listening.

Page 363

Time: 5 minutes

- Have the CD player and track ready.
- Read the direction line aloud to students.
- Play the track for students and have students respond.
- Review by having students tell you what they *can* and *can't* do.

**CHART 12-2.** Pronunciation of *Can* and *Can't*. Page 364

Time: 10–15 minutes

Though students may not always be able to distinguish between *can* and *can't* when listening to native speakers, they can help themselves be better understood by exaggerating the final *-t* sound.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Ask a student to read example sentence (a) aloud.

- Read the notes included on the right of the chart aloud and repeat *can* by making simple sentences about students and writing these on the board. For example:

*Tae-Weong can also speak Spanish.*

*Carlo can ride a unicycle.*

- Ask another student to read example sentence (b) aloud.
- Read the notes included in the chart regarding the pronunciation of *can't*. Remind students that the *a* sound is stressed and that this stress will help students distinguish *can* from *can't*.

□ **EXERCISE 6.** Listening. Page 364

Time: 10 minutes

- Have the CD player and track ready.
- Read the direction line aloud to students.
- Have students read through the two examples given and emphasize that students will need to be listening carefully for the modal in this exercise.
- Play the track for students and have them circle the modal they hear, affirmative (*can*) or negative (*can't*).
- Correct by having students tell you, individually, which modal they heard.
- Use the script as needed to clarify any disputes, and write original student sentences on the board.

□ **EXERCISE 7.** Listening. Page 364

Time: 10 minutes

- Have the CD player and track ready.
- Read the direction line aloud to students.
- Ask a student or students to read the ad aloud.
- Discuss why a job announcement like this may not contain subjects before the verbs (cost per letter or word) and discuss the use of the word *Needs* in the ad.
- Play the track.
- Lead discussion of why Matt is or is not a good candidate for the job advertised.
- Have students form their sentences with *can* and / or *can't*.

**Optional Vocabulary**

skills  
job opening  
manner  
available

□ **EXERCISE 8.** Warm-up. Page 365

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students answer the Warm-up questions.

**Expansion:** Ask more questions using *can* in combination with other *wh*-question words. Write these on the board as you go and include students' answers.

*Where can you find fresh fruit?*

*We can find fresh fruit at a farm stand or a fruit stand.*

When can you phone your family?  
 I can phone my family very early in the morning.

What can you do here on the weekends?  
 I can go downtown. I can run along the river.  
 I can shop in Harvard Square.

Who can help you if you are sick?  
 A nurse or doctor can help me if I am really sick.

### CHART 12-3. Using *Can*: Questions.

Page 365

Time: 10–15 minutes

*Can* is often found in question-answer exchanges and is particularly important when students are using English as the language of travel. Emphasize that because students know basic question forms already (both yes / no and *wh*-questions), they should be able to use *can* correctly in question forms in everyday speech. It is common for beginners to say simply, “I can leave early?” with exaggerated question intonation to ask a *can* question. Push your students to use correct question structure with *can* / *can't* when they are asking questions in class.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Ask a student to read example questions (a) and (b) aloud, along with their answers.
- Have students give you additional questions using the target grammar and write them on the board. For example:

Can Ahmed water-ski?  
 Yes, he can. No, he can't.

Can Freda paint well?  
 Yes, she can. No, she can't.

- Have students read questions (c) and (d) aloud.
- Discuss what kind of answers follow a *wh*-question.
- Have students read the responses to (c) and (d).
- Ask students to formulate *wh*-questions with *can*.
- Write student-generated questions with *can* and encourage other students to respond. Write responses underneath.

What can you make with apples?  
 I can make apple pie.

Where can you find snakes?  
 We can find snakes in warm climates, often in the desert.

Who can order the army to fight?  
 The president can order the army to fight.

### □ EXERCISE 9. Question practice. Page 365

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Ask students to read the completed examples aloud.
- Give students (in pairs, if you wish) time to complete all the items on their own.
- Correct by asking student pairs to read their questions and short answers aloud.

### □ EXERCISE 10. Let's talk: pairwork.

Page 366

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- With a student, read through the example aloud.
- Have students pick a partner (or put them into pairs) and have them decide who will be Partner A and Partner B.
- Circulate while students work through the items.
- Make note of mistakes in pronunciation or usage to review at the end of the exercise.
- Review by asking questions with various items to different class members.
- Ask questions with the same item of more than one student in order to promote comparison.

### □ EXERCISE 11. Listening. Page 366

Time: 10 minutes

- Have the CD player and track ready.
- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students fill in missing words as they hear them when you play the CD track.
- Correct by having students read the completed sentences aloud.
- Refer to the script as necessary during review.

### □ EXERCISE 12. Reading. Page 367

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Before reading the passage, write *color blindness* on the board and ask students if they know anyone who has this condition and what they know about it.
- It is known that men tend to have more incidences of color blindness than women. Ask your students if they have heard this.
- Ask students what kind of professions would be difficult for someone who is color-blind, facilitating responses such as pilot, electrician (colored wires), member of the military, and so on.
- Have students take turns reading sentences from the passage aloud.
- Then ask various students to take turns reading and correctly completing the items.

#### Optional Vocabulary

hardware store  
 stick shift  
 return a call  
 confuse

### □ EXERCISE 13. Warm-up. Page 368

Time: 5–8 minutes

- Think of something that most people can't do but that you can.
- Write this on the board and ask students if they *know how* to do it. For example:

*I know how to juggle.*

- Read the direction line aloud.

- Put students into pairs and give them time to discuss the phrases and make true statements about themselves. Then they should ask each other questions using *know how to*.

**CHART 12-4.** Using *Know How To*. Page 368  
Time: 10–15 minutes

Explain to your students that *know how to* is used to stress that the abilities were learned. Tell students that *know-how* is even used as a phrase to describe skilled and learned knowledge.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Have students read example sentences (a) and (b) aloud.
- Discuss the difference in meaning between *can* and *know how to*.
- Ask other students to read example sentences (c) and (d) aloud.
- Invite students to share things they *know how to* do because they have learned these skills.
- Write these student contributions on the board. For example:

*Fabiana knows how to crochet and knit.*

*Siham and Akiko know how to ski.*

*Viktor and I know how to build a fire in the woods.*

□ **EXERCISE 14.** Let's talk: pairwork.  
Page 368  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line.
- Put students into pairs.
- While students ask and answer questions of one another, circulate and interact with each pair.
- Review by having students share what their partner *knows how to* do.

□ **EXERCISE 15.** Speaking and writing:  
pairwork. Page 369  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud to students.
- Put students into pairs.

**Part I**

- Have students work with a partner and complete the chart.
- Ask students to form questions using *know how to*.

**Part II**

- Ask students to write questions and answer them, according to the chart information.

□ **EXERCISE 16.** Let's write: small groups.  
Page 369  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud to students.
- Put students into small groups.
- Ask students to complete each item with their groups.
- Correct by having students from each group read their completions aloud and compare these with other students' responses.
- Encourage discussion and debate about items 1 and 2 and write completions on the board. (Students may not agree on exactly what three-year-olds *know how to* do or *don't know how to* do.)

**Optional Vocabulary**

replace  
hard drive

□ **EXERCISE 17.** Warm-up. Page 369  
Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Have students read the items and select the verbs that are correct for them.
- Ask students to share their completed items and write them on the board, using information given by students to generate sentences about the class as a whole. For example:

*Two years ago, Marco, Celeste, and Pei Ying couldn't drive a car.*

*Two years ago, Alfonso, Pema, and Abdullah could drive a car.*

**CHART 12-5.** Using *Could*: Past of *Can*.  
Page 370  
Time: 10–15 minutes

Explain to your students that *could* is used both for the past of *can* and to indicate future possibility. However, when students are talking about one completed action in the past, *could* is not used. It is used to show past ability, and students should be reminded of this.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Ask a student to read example sentences (a) and (b) aloud.
- Review the notes included in the right of the chart.
- Ask students to share things they *could* do when they were younger and things they *couldn't* do.
- Write these on the board. For example:

*When they were younger, Mahmoud and Yuki could stand on their heads.*

*When she was younger, Gabriella couldn't dive off the high dive.*

- Ask a student to read example question (c) aloud.
- Review the word order used in a *could* question, as explained in the notes.
- Ask students a few questions about what they *could* and *couldn't* do ten years ago. For example:

*Could you speak any English ten years ago?*  
*Could you ski ten years ago?*

□ **EXERCISE 18.** Let's talk: pairwork.

Page 370

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Have students get into pairs and ask and tell each other what they *could* and *couldn't* do.
- Circulate around the room, engaging with pairs and correcting pronunciation and usage as needed.
- Review by having students take turns reading the sentences and saying whether they and / or their partner could do the actions described.

**Expansion:** Prepare index cards with the following phrases. Each one is people living at a particular historical time.

*Cave people.*

*People living before the year 1000 A.D.*

*People living in the Middle Ages.*

*People living in the 1700s.*

*People living in the 1800s.*

*People living at the turn of the last century (1900).*

*People living in the 1940s.*

*People living in the 1970s.*

In class, put students into groups and / or pairs and distribute the prepared index cards. Have each pair or group compose sentences that include completions and variations of the following sentence:

*They couldn't \_\_\_\_\_, but they could \_\_\_\_\_.*

The task is for each group to write descriptive sentences that will allow other students to guess the time frame given, based on what people *couldn't* do. The goal is for students to include enough revealing clues to help other groups guess the time frame. For example:

*People living in ancient Greece*

*They couldn't travel far, but they could see entertainment in a big outdoor theater.*

*Many people could vote, but slaves, foreign people, and women couldn't.*

*They could see the beginnings of democracy, but they couldn't drive cars.*

□ **EXERCISE 19.** Looking at grammar.

Page 370

Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Have a student read the completed example aloud.
- Give students time to complete the exercise on their own, using the phrases given or their own words.

- Review the completed exercise by having students read their completions aloud.
- Correct pronunciation and usage immediately and use the board to clarify mistakes as they arise.

□ **EXERCISE 20.** Let's talk: pairwork.

Page 371

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Explain that the cues the exercise gives are to connect the *could* / *couldn't* sentence with a particular reason.
- Have students read the situation and examples aloud.
- Put students into pairs.
- Give students time to expand the cues into full sentences and explain what Mr. Kostis couldn't do and why.
- Have pairs read their sentences aloud and write challenging items on the board to clarify correction.

□ **EXERCISE 21.** Let's talk: class activity.

Page 372

Time: 15 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Emphasize that students need to distinguish whether they need to use *can't* or *couldn't*.
- Read the example aloud.
- Have students close their books.
- Read the sentences aloud and have students give the negative results of each situation.
- Correct pronunciation and usage immediately, and put useful student responses on the board.

□ **EXERCISE 22.** Check your knowledge.

Page 372

Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line.
- Give students time to complete the items independently.
- To review, ask students to read their corrections aloud and justify / explain them to the class by using the grammar rules they have focused on in this chapter.
- Put any more challenging items on the board for review.

**Optional Vocabulary**

communicate	poverty
cartwheels	turn up
hearing aid	

□ **EXERCISE 23.** Warm-up. Page 373

Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Ask students to match the form of *can* in Column A with the appropriate *be able to* sentence in Column B.
- Review the items as a class and reiterate that forms of *can* and *be able to* are interchangeable in meaning.



**CHART 12-6.** Using *Be Able To*. Page 373  
Time: 10–15 minutes

Explain to your students that *be able to* describes both ability and possibility. Stress that *be able to* is not a modal, but it has the same meaning as *can / could*.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Ask a student to read example sentences (a) and (b) aloud.
- Reiterate that both sentences have the same meaning.
- Invite students to contribute additional sentences using *be able to* in the present. Write these on the board:

*Federico is able to play the piano.*

*Vilma is able to scuba dive.*

- Ask a student to read example sentences (c) and (d) aloud.
- Invite students to contribute additional sentences using *be able to* in future. Write these on the board:

*Bertrand will be able to climb Mount Kilimanjaro next spring.*

*Chun Wua will be able to snowboard when she returns to Korea.*

- Ask a student to read example sentences (e) and (f) aloud.
- Reiterate that both sentences have the same meaning.
- Invite students to contribute additional sentences using *be able to* in the past. Write these on the board:

*When he lived in Rio, Kenji was able to surf every weekend.*

*When Marcia was young, she was able to walk on her hands.*

□ **EXERCISE 24.** Looking at grammar.  
Page 373  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Have students read the completed examples aloud.
- Give students time to transform each item into a similar sentence using a form of *be able to*.
- Review the items as a class by having students read their *be able to* sentences aloud.
- Correct mistakes in structure (not changing the tense of *be*), pronunciation, and or usage right away.
- Have students write items on the board for further clarification.

□ **EXERCISE 25.** Reading and grammar.  
Page 374  
Time: 10–15 minutes

**Part I**

- Read the direction line.
- Ask students to take turns reading the passage aloud.
- Ask comprehension and vocabulary questions as they naturally arise.

**Part II**

- Read the direction line.
- Have students underline the *could*, *couldn't*, and *can* verbs.
- Give students time to rewrite the *could*, *couldn't*, and *can* sentences using the correct forms of *be able to*.
- Correct by having students read the new *be able to* sentences aloud.

□ **EXERCISE 26.** Listening. Page 375  
Time: 10 minutes

- Have the CD player and track ready.
- Read the direction line aloud and prepare students to complete the sentences with what they hear.
- Correct after you have played the track through and students have completed the sentences with what they have heard.
- If there are any questions, read from the script so that students can readily hear the words missed.

**Optional Vocabulary**

bending	enrolled
thief	cashier
multilingual	encourages
basic	lectures
common	wondering
frustrated	

□ **EXERCISE 27.** Warm-up. Page 375  
Time: 5–10 minutes

- Tell students to look at the illustration and then choose the correct response.
- Ask students to explain why b is the correct response to what is presented in the picture.

**CHART 12-7.** Using *Very* and *Too* + Adjective. Page 376  
Time: 10–15 minutes

Explain to students that *very* strengthens an adjective but does not necessitate a negative consequence. *Very* is different from *too*. When *too* precedes an adjective, a negative consequence follows.

- Write the chart title on the board.
- Ask a student to read example sentences (a) and (b) aloud.
- Refer to the notes at the right.
- To model this for students on the board, invite students to help you make new sentences using observable facts.
- Write the sentences on the board and stress where the meanings are neutral or negative. For example:  
*Javier is very tall.* → *neutral meaning* → *no negative result*  
*Javier is too tall.* → *negative result* → *Javier is too tall. He can't sleep on a plane.*

- Have students read sentences (c) and (d) aloud.
- Write the sentences on the board, underlining *very* and *too*.
- Ask students to read example sentences (e) and (f) aloud, and stress that with *too* we anticipate that a negative result will follow.
- If your students are having trouble using *two*, *too*, and *to*, show them the following chart and discuss the different meanings of the words and their pronunciations.

Using <i>Two</i> , <i>Too</i> , and <i>To</i>		
two	(a) I have <b>two</b> children.	<b>Two</b> , <b>too</b> , and <b>to</b> have the same pronunciation. In (a): <b>two</b> = a number.
too	(b) Timmy is <b>too</b> young. He can't read. (c) Ann saw the movie. I saw the movie <b>too</b> .	In (b): <b>too</b> young = impossible to do because of his youth. In (c): <b>too</b> = <b>also</b> .
to	(d) I talked <b>to</b> Jim. (e) I want <b>to</b> watch television.	In (d): <b>to</b> = a preposition. In (e): <b>to</b> = part of an infinitive.

□ **EXERCISE 28.** Let's talk. Page 376  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Put students into pairs.
- Have students look at the two illustrations and discuss the example sentences.
- Then tell pairs to formulate two sentences, using *very* or *too* and *can* or *can't*, that make sense for each pair of illustrations.
- Ask students to read their sentences. Correct and review as a class.

□ **EXERCISE 29.** Looking at grammar. Page 378  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line to students.
- Give students time to complete the items by using the phrases given.
- Correct and review by having students read their completions aloud.
- Compare students' completions and write any challenging items on the board.

□ **EXERCISE 30.** Looking at grammar. Page 378  
Time: 10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Have students complete the sentences by using *too* + adjectives from the box.
- Give students time to complete as seatwork and correct as a class.

□ **EXERCISE 31.** Looking at grammar. Page 379  
Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Lead this activity from the center.
- Have students read the completed examples aloud.
- Ask students to complete the sentences on sight by calling on them individually.
- Provide immediate correction.

□ **EXERCISE 32.** Reading and listening. Page 380  
Time: 15–20 minutes

**Part I**

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Look through the reading with students and discuss highlighted vocabulary.
- Have students take turns reading the passage aloud.
- Ask students comprehension and vocabulary questions that prompt them to restate or paraphrase what they have read.

**Part II**

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Give students time to complete the statements, referring back to the passage as needed.
- Ask students to read their completions aloud and point to specific sentences in the passage to justify them.

**Part III**

- Have the CD player and track ready.
- Read the direction line aloud to students.
- Have students read their completions aloud and correct by referring to the script, as needed.

□ **EXERCISE 33.** Check your knowledge. Page 381  
Time: 5–10 minutes

- Read the direction line.
- Give students time to correct the mistakes they find.
- Ask students to read the corrected sentences aloud and explain what they changed to make the sentences correct.

□ **EXERCISE 34.** Writing. Page 382  
Time: 15–20 minutes

**Part I**

- Read the direction line to students.
- Have students begin thinking about a fictional character they would like to describe.
- Ask students to take turns reading the passage aloud.
- Give students time to write a paragraph about their chosen characters. Remind them to include the information listed below the "Superman" passage.

**Part II**

- Read the direction line aloud.
- Ask students either to share their passage with a partner or simply to use the editing checklist to proof their own work.
- Discuss writing with individual students.

**Optional Vocabulary**

result	rows
solve	objects
take a break	weak
dorm	justice
gained weight	catches criminals
stand up straight	rescue
complete	hero
create	admire
strangers	