

# Modal verbs 4

Lesson code: 11LV-46CA-PQNX

INTERMEDIATE +

 American English

## 1 Presentation

We use the modal verbs **can**, **could**, **may**, **would**, and **will** for requests, offers, invitations, and permission. Study the table below.

	Use	Examples
<b>can</b>	to ask somebody to do something to ask for or give permission to offer to do something	<b>Can you</b> help me? <b>Can I</b> have another chocolate? Yes, <b>you can</b> use my laptop. No, you <b>you can't</b> use my laptop. <b>Can I</b> help you with your bags?
<b>could</b>	to ask somebody to do something to ask for permission <i>(more polite)</i>	<b>Could you</b> call me a taxi? <b>Could I</b> come to work a little later? Do you think <b>I could</b> borrow your phone?
<b>may</b>	to ask for or give permission <i>(polite)</i>	<b>May I</b> speak to you for a second? Yes, <b>you may</b> use my laptop. No, <b>you may not</b> use my laptop.
<b>would you like</b>	to make an offer or invitation	<b>Would you like</b> another chocolate? <b>Would you like</b> to go out?
<b>will</b>	to ask somebody to do something	Peter, <b>will you</b> come here for a minute?
<b>would</b>	to ask somebody to do something <i>(very polite)</i>	<b>Would you</b> carry my bags for me, please?

### Dialogue

- A:** **Would you like** to go for a walk in the park?  
**B:** Sure. **Can we** go after lunch?  
**A:** Of course. **Could you** meet me outside my building?  
**B:** No problem.



**2 Practice 1 - Requests and offers**



Listen to a dialogue between a host and guest. Go to <https://www.linguahouse.com/r/wvc> or scan the QR code on the right to play the audio. Complete the four requests/offers and replies below.

1. A: \_\_\_\_\_ you something to drink?  
 B: Yes, please. A coffee \_\_\_\_\_ nice.
2. A: \_\_\_\_\_ lunch now?  
 B: No thanks, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. A: \_\_\_\_\_ one of those muffins over there? They look very tasty.  
 B: Yes, of course. \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. A: \_\_\_\_\_ my email from your computer? I'm expecting an important message.  
 B: \_\_\_\_\_ the internet isn't working at the moment.

**3 Practice 2**

What would you say the situations below? Use the modal verbs on page 1. More than one answer may be possible.

1. You need to take a short break from your work. Ask your boss for permission. Be polite.  
 .....
2. You are organizing a party. Invite your friend Ross.  
 .....
3. You are at a clothes store. You see a shirt that you really like. Ask the store assistant to show it to you.  
 .....
4. You see an old lady trying to carry some heavy bags. Offer to help her.  
 .....
5. You have arranged to have lunch with a friend at 2 pm. Ask her if she can meet you at 1 pm instead.  
 .....
6. A stranger asks for permission to smoke in your building. You refuse.  
 .....
7. You need to mail a letter urgently, but you have no time. Your neighbor is going out. Ask him/her to do it for you. Be polite.  
 .....



2 Practice 1 - Requests and offers

**Simon:** Can I get you something to drink?

**Gina:** Yes, please. A coffee would be nice.

**Simon:** How do you like your coffee?

**Gina:** With cream, please.

**Simon:** Do you take sugar?

**Gina:** Just one.

**Simon:** Here you are. Would you like to eat lunch now?

**Gina:** No thanks, I'm all right. I ate on the plane. But could I just try one of those muffins over there? They look very tasty.

**Simon:** Yes, of course. Help yourself.

**Gina:** Thank you. Oh, before I forget... could I check my email from your computer? I'm expecting an important message.

**Simon:** I'm afraid the internet isn't working at the moment.

**Gina:** OK, I'll just make a quick phone call if that's all right.

**Simon:** Sure. Go ahead.



### 2 Practice 1 - Requests and offers

1. Can I get; would be
2. Would you like to eat; all right
3. Could I just try; Help yourself
4. Could I check; I'm afraid

### 3 Practice 2

1. May I take a short break, please? Do you think I could take a short break?
2. Ross, would you like to come to a party?
3. Can you show me that shirt? Could you show me that shirt?
4. Can I help you with your bags?
5. Can you meet me at 1 pm instead? Could you meet me at 1 pm instead?
6. No, you cannot smoke in the building. No, you may not smoke in the building.
7. Could you mail this letter for me, please? Would you mail this letter for me, please?

