

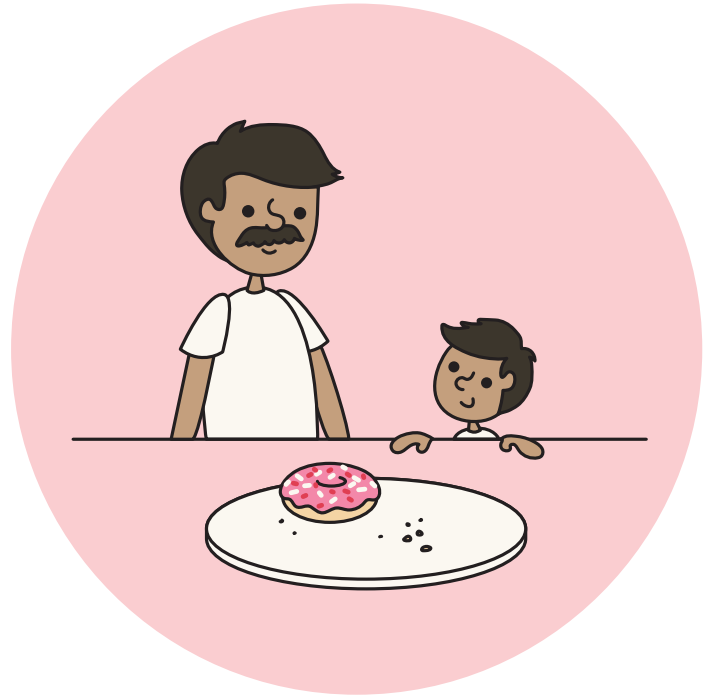
Asking for Permission

Let's Learn

In this lesson, you will learn how to ask for permission politely. To ask permission means to find out if you are *allowed* or *permitted*.

You will learn how to use the following modals and expressions:

- Can
- Could
- May
- Do you mind if
- Is it okay if



Warm-Up

BRAINSTORM

In English, it is polite to ask for permission before you do or use something that affects others.

What are some examples of things people ask permission for?

- | | |
|---|---------|
| • <u>borrowing a pen</u> | • _____ |
| • <u>getting a ball from someone's yard</u> | • _____ |
| • <u>using a phone</u> | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |
| • _____ | • _____ |

Dialogues

Read the dialogues, and practise with a partner.

Dialogue 1

- A: Can I borrow the car, Mom?
B: Sure, go ahead.
A: Is it okay if I take the leftover pizza too?
B: That's fine by me, but ask your dad.

Dialogue 2

- A: Do you mind if I park out front?
B: I'm sorry. Those spots are reserved. There's a parking lot across the street.
A: Great. May I leave my bags here for a moment?
B: Be my guest!

Dialogue 3

- A: Do you mind if we charge our phones here?
B: I'm afraid the charging stations are for paying customers only.
A: Okay, could we order some drinks and charge our phones?
B: Absolutely.
A: Great. Could I use your washroom too?
B: Sure, go ahead.

Useful Expressions

Review these common questions and responses.
Recite them together as a class.

A. Asking for Permission

Patterns

To ask for permission,
use one of these patterns:

Can / Could / May
+ subject + base verb

Do you mind if / Is it okay if
+ subject + present verb

Informal

- Can I use your phone?
- Can we park here?
- Is it okay if I sit here?

Formal

- May I borrow your ruler?
- Could she use this computer?
- Do you mind if he leaves his bag here?

B. Giving Permission (Approval)

To give or grant permission, use one word or phrase:

Strong Approval

- Of course.
- Sure.
- Absolutely.
- Be my guest. (*formal*)
- You don't (even) have to ask. (*yes*)
- By all means.
- Anytime!

Weak Approval

- I guess.
- If you must.
- Fine. Go ahead.
- It's fine by me, but ask...

I Don't Mind

Understanding a response to the question "Do you mind if..." can be tricky. You need to listen for the tone and look at the body language.

Q: Do you mind if we park here?

A: Of course! [*smiling*] (Of course I don't mind.)

A: Sure! [*smiling*] (Sure, it's fine.)

A: Absolutely not. [*smiling*] (I don't mind at all.)

A: Actually, I do mind. [*shaking head*] (It's not okay.)

STILL UNSURE?

Follow up with a direct question:

Q: Are you sure it's okay?

A: Yes, it's fine!

Useful Expressions cont.

C. Refusing Permission (Refusal)

To refuse permission, use these expressions:

Apologetic Refusal

- I'm sorry, but...
- I'm afraid I can't allow...
- I'm afraid that is not allowed.
- I wish you could, but...
- Sorry. Not today.

Strong Refusal (informal)

- No way.
- Absolutely not.
- Not a chance.
- Good try.
- Not happening.

The Magic Word

Some people won't take "no" for an answer.
They use the magic word (*Please?*) to beg for permission.

Child: Can I eat the last doughnut?

Dad: No way. You had one already.

Child: Please? [*whining*]

Dad: Not a chance.

Child: Come on. I'm hungry. Pretty please? [*stronger whining*]

Dad: Fine. Go ahead.

Listening Practice

A. Formal & Informal

Listen to these questions and responses. Are they formal or informal?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. a) formal
b) informal | 4. a) formal
b) informal | 7. a) formal
b) informal |
| 2. a) formal
b) informal | 5. a) formal
b) informal | 8. a) formal
b) informal |
| 3. a) formal
b) informal | 6. a) formal
b) informal | 9. a) formal
b) informal |

B. Choose the Correct Response

Listen to the recording.

Circle the best response to each question or statement.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. a) Yes, they are ready.
b) Absolutely not.
c) I like cookies too. | 4. a) It's fine by me.
b) I'm sorry, but I forgot.
c) That's not today. | 7. a) Absolutely. Have two!
b) It did.
c) Sure, go ahead. |
| 2. a) I guess.
b) It's Tuesday.
c) If she must. | 5. a) I'm sorry, but I need that spot.
b) Be my problem.
c) Great, thanks. | 8. a) Not a chance!
b) I see that.
c) You're welcome. |
| 3. a) No, thank you.
b) Anytime!
c) I'm afraid so. | 6. a) Not today.
b) I sure did.
c) It did happen. | 9. a) No, he didn't. Go ahead.
b) Sorry, I didn't.
c) Absolutely. You can have it. |

Speaking Practice

A. Complete the Formal Dialogue

Complete the dialogue, and practise with a partner.

A: Do you mind if I leave halfway through the meeting? I have an appointment.

B: _____ .
1. (weak approval)

A: Sorry. Also, _____ I get the Wi-Fi password?
2.

B: _____ . It's GuestFree. One word, capital G and F.
3. (strong approval)

A: Thanks a lot.

B: No problem. _____ I trade seats with you?
4.

A: _____ .
5. (strong approval)

B. Change the Informal Dialogue

Read the dialogue, and practise with a partner.
Then change the information in bold to another situation.
Practise again.

A: **Can I borrow your pen?**

B: Of course.

A: Thanks. **Is it okay if I use your notes from last week too?**

B: Good try.

A: Please?

B: No way.

A: Come on! **I was sick last week.**

B: **Fine. Go ahead.**

Review

Task 1

FORMAL OR INFORMAL?

Are the following exchanges formal or informal?
 Does the respondent approve or refuse?
 Put a check mark (✓) in the correct columns.

#	Dialogue	Formality		Response	
		Formal	Informal	Approval	Refusal
1	Q: Can I have a piece of this pizza? A: You don't have to ask.				
2	Q: Do you mind if I pet your dog? A: I'm sorry, but he is a guide dog.				
3	Q: Is it okay if I run out for a sec? A: Not happening!				
4	Q: May I have the Wi-Fi password? A: I'm afraid that's only for guests.				
5	Q: Could we please use this chair? A: I'm sorry. We're waiting for someone.				
6	Q: Can I sleep at your house tonight? A: Anytime!				

Review cont.

Task 2

COMPLETE THE DIALOGUE

Complete this dialogue on a piece of paper. Recite it with your teacher or with a partner.

Student: _____ I rewrite this math test?
1. (formal request)

Prof: _____ I don't allow retests.
2. (apologetic refusal)

Student: Okay. I understand. _____ I get some extra help
3. (formal request)
before the final exam? I really don't understand this material.

Prof: _____ ! _____ I give
4. (strong approval) 5. (informal request)
your email address to a tutor?

Student: By all means! Thank you.

Task 3

ASKING FOR PERMISSION

Work with a partner. Role-play a **formal** request for permission in a workplace. Then role-play an **informal** request for permission in a neighbourhood. Switch roles so that you each have a turn using formal and informal language. Use approval (weak and strong) and refusal in your responses.

Your audience (classmates/teacher) will have to answer the following:

- What did Speaker A ask for permission for?
- Did Speaker B approve or refuse?
- Was the situation formal or informal?

Speaking Assessment Tool

Student / Group: _____

Date	CLB Level	Assessed By	Role-Play Scenario	Skill Competency
			Asking for Permission (formal & informal)	III. Getting Things Done

Criteria	Achieved 	Achieved With Help 	Needs Improvement 
uses a variety of polite/formal language (including modals) to ask for permission			
uses informal language to ask for permission in an informal situation			
uses appropriate language to refuse permission in formal and informal situations			
uses weak and strong expressions to give approval			
speaks clearly and loudly			

Notes

Learner Reflection

ASKING FOR PERMISSION

Add check marks (✓) to show what you've learned in this lesson.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Can I...	Yes (very well) 	Yes (with help) 	Not yet 
ask for permission politely?			
ask for permission in formal and informal situations?			
give strong and weak approval after a request for permission?			
give apologetic and strong refusal after a request for permission?			
beg for permission?			
recognize the difference between formal and informal requests, approvals, and refusals?			

My Notes

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students review language and useful expressions for asking for permission. They practise using formal and informal language in questions and responses and learn to recognize and express approval and refusal. Includes listening practice and assessment tasks.

LEVEL: Low Int – Int / CLB 3 –5

TIME: 1 hour

TAGS: functional English, asking for permission, requests, refusal, approval, formality, modals, useful expressions, manners, polite, getting things done, CLB, LINC, PBLA

Let's Learn

Go over the learning objective with your students. Introduce the related verbs *permit* and *allow*.

Warm-Up

Brainstorm different things that people ask permission to do and use. Write the responses on the board and have students copy the examples to complete their lists.

CLB Skill Competency

Speaking: I. Interacting with Others,
III. Getting Things Done

Writing: II. Reproducing Information

Dialogues

Have students practise the dialogues out loud in pairs.

CLB Skill Competency

Speaking: III. Getting Things Done

Useful Expressions

Recite the words and expressions and have your students repeat after you for pronunciation and intonation practice.

CLB Skill Competencies

Listening: III. Getting Things Done

Speaking: III. Getting Things Done

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Listening Practice

A. FORMAL & INFORMAL

Play the recording or read the questions and statements out loud. Your students will decide if the examples represent formal or informal language.

#	Question/Statement	Answer
1	Do you mind if I use your phone?	a
2	Not happening.	b
3	Please?	b
4	I'm afraid that is against our policy.	a
5	I'm very sorry, but we can't allow that.	a
6	May I use your phone to call home?	a
7	Can I grab a glass of water?	b
8	No way!	b
9	Hey! Is it okay if I sit here?	b

B. CHOOSE THE CORRECT RESPONSE

Play the recording or say each sentence or question for your students. Your students will listen and circle the best response.

#	Sentence/Question	Answer
1	Can I make cookies?	b
2	Could I please take Monday off?	a
3	May I borrow your watering can?	b
4	Do you mind if Marco leaves early?	a
5	Is it okay if I park in the driveway?	a

6	Can we order pizza?	a
7	Could I charge my phone?	c
8	Please?	a
9	May I borrow this pen?	c

CLB Skill Competencies

Listening: III. Getting Things Done

Speaking Practice

A. COMPLETE THE FORMAL DIALOGUE

Answers will vary.

- That's fine. / I guess. / If you must.
- may / could
- Absolutely. / Of course.
- Could
- Of course. / No problem. / Absolutely. / Be my guest.

B. CHANGE THE INFORMAL DIALOGUE

Students can read the dialogue and practise with a partner. Then have them change the information in bold to another situation and perform it for the class.

CLB Skill Competencies

Speaking: III. Getting Things Done

Writing: II. Reproducing Information

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Review (Assessment Tasks)

The last three tasks are optional and can be used for assessment purposes and/or review practice. Task 3 includes an assessment tool that you can share with learners so that they understand your expectations.

TASK 1

Have students read the dialogue and decide whether each exchange is formal or informal and accepted or refused.

1. informal / approval
2. formal / refusal
3. informal / refusal
4. formal / refusal
5. formal / refusal
6. informal / approval

CLB Skill Competencies

Reading: III. Getting Things Done

TASK 2

Have students complete the text and practise it with you or with a partner. Answers will vary.

1. Do you mind if / Could / May
2. I'm afraid / Sorry, but
3. Could
4. Absolutely! / Of course!
5. Is it okay if / Can

CLB Skill Competencies

Writing: II. Reproducing Information

Speaking: III. Getting Things Done

TASK 3

If you want to use this task for summative assessment, hand out the ready-made Role-Play Assessment tool (page 9), or personalize your own from a template in Shared Criteria for Success: <https://esllibrary.com/resources/2352>

Place students in pairs and have them do a role-play for the class (or just for you) using the scenarios provided. You can decide how much time you want to give pairs to practise.

CLB Skill Competencies

Speaking: III. Getting Things Done

Learner Reflection

When you are finished with this lesson, have your students reflect on their learning by filling in the chart.

ABOUT THE EMOJI:

The emoji (and their derivatives) used in this lesson are from Twemoji, an open-source project by Twitter. They are licensed under CC-BY 4.0. <https://github.com/twitter/twemoji>

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Answer Key cont.

Canadian Language Benchmarks Summary

OVERVIEW

Stage: 1

CLB: 3-5*

Primary Skill Competency: Speaking – III. Getting Things Done

PAGE	TASK	SKILL COMPETENCIES
1	Warm-Up	Speaking: I. Interacting with Others, III. Getting Things Done Writing: II. Reproducing Information
2	Dialogues 1-3	Speaking: III. Getting Things Done
3	Useful Expressions	Listening: III. Getting Things Done Speaking: III. Getting Things Done
5	Listening Practice	Listening: III. Getting Things Done
6	Speaking Practice	Speaking: III. Getting Things Done Writing: II. Reproducing Information
7	Review Task 1	Reading: III. Getting Things Done
8	Review Task 2	Writing: II. Reproducing Information Speaking: III. Getting Things Done
8-9	Review Task 3 (PBLA)** <i>Includes Assessment Tool</i>	Speaking: III. Getting Things Done

***Note:**

This CLB range is suggested by ESL Library based on the descriptors in the Canadian Language Benchmarks guide: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/language-benchmarks.pdf>

****Note:**

PBLA refers to portfolio-based learning assessment in the LINC program (though any teacher can use these tasks for review or assessment). Visit our Resources section for Assessment Tools that you can print and personalize for PBLA: <https://esllibrary.com/resources>

Answer Key cont.

Canadian Language Benchmarks Summary cont.

PROFILES OF ABILITY

The following descriptors from the Canadian Language Benchmarks apply to this lesson and are used with permission. For more detailed information see: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/language-benchmarks.pdf> and visit: <https://www.language.ca/>

BENCHMARK	THE LEARNER CAN:
Speaking (3-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make and respond to an expanding range of simple requests related to everyday activities. (3) • Give and respond to informal requests, permission. (5) • Provide details and give reasons. (5) • Use modals with the appropriate level of politeness. (5)
Listening (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify phrases and sentences related to simple persuasive functions.
Reading (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get information from simple formatted texts.
Writing (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy or record a range of information from short texts for personal use.