

Activity Type

Reading, listening and speaking activity, pair work

Focus

Asking for, granting and refusing permission

Modals of permission: can, may and could

Aim

To play an asking permission game where you ask permission to do different things and guess whether your partner is going to grant or refuse permission.

Preparation

Make one copy of the two sets of cards for each pair of students and cut as indicated. Keep the two sets of card separate.

Level

Elementary (A1-A2)

Time

20 minutes

Introduction

In this modals of permission game, students ask permission to do different things and guess whether their partner is going to grant or refuse permission.

This game helps students practice the modals of permission 'can', 'may' and 'could' as well as various phrases for granting and refusing permission.

Procedure

Divide the students into pairs.

Give each pair a set of permission cards and a set of response cards.

Ask the students to shuffle each set of cards separately and place them face down on the desk in two piles.

Students take it in turns to pick up a permission card and use the modal verb (can, may or could) and the prompt shown on the card to ask permission to do something, e.g. 'May I use your computer?'

The student then guesses whether their partner will grant or refuse permission.

Their partner then picks up a response card and grants or refuses permission using the expression on the card, e.g. 'Yes, of course.'

If the student guessed correctly, they score a point.

If not, their partner scores a point.

The game continues with students taking it in turns to play until all the cards have been used.

The student with the most points at the end of the game wins.

Note: This resource can be edited using a PDF editor.

Permission cards


You want to use your friend's computer. (May I...?)	You want to borrow your friend's phone. (Can I...?)
You want to have another piece of cake. (Could I...?)	You want to leave class early. (May I...?)
You want to ask your friend something. (Can I...?)	You want to change the TV channel. (Can I...?)
You want to sit with your friend. (May I...?)	You want to have a glass of water. (May I...?)
You want to open the door. (Could I...?)	You want to turn off the air conditioning. (Can I...?)
You want to use the bathroom. (May I...?)	You want to move to a new desk. (Could I...?)
You want to close the door. (Can I...?)	You want to turn on the light. (Could I...?)
You want to borrow a pen. (May I...?)	You want to borrow some money. (Can I...?)

Response cards


Yes, of course.	Yes, no problem.	No, you aren't allowed.	Yes, sure.
No, please don't.	Unfortunately, I need to say no.	Yes, please feel free.	No, I would prefer it if you don't.
No, I'm afraid you can't.	Yes, be my guest.	No. I'm sorry, that's not possible.	Yes, go ahead.
No. I'm afraid that isn't possible.	Yes, go right ahead.	Yes, go for it.	No, I'd rather you don't do that.