





MODAL VERBS “CAN, COULD, BE ABLE TO”

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- The House of Commons can make laws and discuss political problems
 - The House of Lords can delay bills for one year
 - When we went into the house, we could smell burning
 - She spoke in a low voice but I could understand what she was saying
 - My friend could speak 5 languages
 - When Tom was 5, he could run 100 meters in 11 seconds

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- The fire spread through the building very quickly but everyone was able (= managed) to escape
 - They didn't want to come with us at first but in the end we were able (=managed) to persuade them

Exercises

can/ be able to

- George has travelled a lot. He ___ speak four languages
- Tom ___ drive but he hasn't got a car
- I can't understand Martin. I've never ___ understand him.
- I used to ___ stand on my head but I can't do it now
- Ask Ann about your problem. She should ___ help you

Could/ was/were be able to / couldn't

- He had hurt his leg, so he ____ walk very well
- She wasn't at home when I phoned but I ____ contact her at her office
- I looked very carefully and I ____ see a figure in the distance
- My grandmother loved music. She ____ play the piano very well
- The boy fell into the river but fortunately we ____ rescue him