Can, Could and Be Able To — Worksheet

30 exercises · Level A1–A2 · Answer key on the last page Free for classroom use

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

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Choose the correct option (a–d) for each gap or question. Check yourself with the answer key on the last page.

1. My grandmother is eighty, but she still _____ a bike.
   a) cans ride b) can to ride c) can ride d) can rides

2. Please turn the music down — I _____ hear what you're saying.
   a) don't can b) can't c) can't to d) not can

3. _____ your sister _____ the guitar? I'd love to hear her.
   a) Does … can play b) Can … plays c) Can … play d) Can … to play

4. Before my knee injury, I _____ faster than all my friends.
   a) could run b) can run c) could ran d) could to run

5. Last night I _____ sleep because of the noise from the street.
   a) can't b) couldn't c) didn't can d) couldn't to

6. Luckily, my parents _____ change their flight to an earlier one.
   a) was able to b) were able c) were able to d) did able to

7. Next year my daughter will _____ walk to school on her own.
   a) can b) be able to c) able to d) be able

8. I haven't _____ my keys since Monday, so I'm using the spare ones.
   a) could find b) can find c) be able to find d) been able to find

9. _____ you _____ to finish the report yesterday, or do you need more time?
   a) Were … able b) Did … able c) Are … able d) Could … able

10. _____ you _____ when you were seven, or did you learn later?
    a) Can … swim b) Did … could swim c) Could … swam d) Could … swim

11. Sorry, you _____ come in here — this room is for staff only.
    a) can b) can't c) don't can d) can't to

12. _____ you _____ the window, please? It's really cold in here.
    a) Could … close b) Could … to close c) Could … closing d) Do … can close

13. "Can you drive me to the station?" "Sorry, I _____ — my car is being repaired."
    a) don't b) am not c) can't d) not can

14. My dad _____ cook at all when he was young, but now he makes amazing pasta.
    a) can't b) wasn't able c) didn't could d) couldn't

15. The stairs were full of smoke, but all the guests _____ get out safely.

a) able to b) were able to c) can d) was able to

16. After two hours of searching, we finally _____ find our hotel.

a) were able to b) could able to c) are able to d) were able

17. If you leave now, you should _____ catch the last bus.

a) can b) could c) be able to d) able to

18. I'm afraid I won't _____ come to your party on Saturday.

a) can b) be able to c) could d) able to

19. My laptop is broken, so I _____ work from home since Tuesday.

a) couldn't b) can't c) haven't been able to d) haven't could

20. Excuse me, _____ I _____ here, or is this seat taken?

a) do … can sit b) can … to sit c) can … sitting d) can … sit

21. When I was a child, I _____ ski, but now I _____ — my knees are too weak.

a) could … can't b) can … can't c) could … don't can d) was able … can't

22. I _____ come to the meeting yesterday, but I'll _____ come next week.

a) can't … be able to b) couldn't … can c) couldn't … able to d) couldn't … be able to

23. We haven't _____ meet since January, but we'll _____ see each other next weekend.

a) been able to … be able to b) could … be able to c) been able to … can d) been able … be able to

24. As a boy, I _____ swim, but one day I _____ pull my friend out of the river.

a) can't … was able to b) couldn't … could c) couldn't … was able to d) couldn't … can

25. I hope _____ come to your wedding, but I'm not sure yet.

a) can b) to can c) be able to d) to be able to

26. Which sentence is correct?

a) My cousin can to play the violin.
b) My cousin can play the violin.
c) My cousin cans play the violin.
d) My cousin can plays the violin.

27. Which sentence is correct?

a) Soon you will can speak English well.
b) Soon you will able to speak English well.
c) Soon you can to speak English well.
d) Soon you will be able to speak English well.

28. Which sentence is correct?

a) The test was hard, but I was able to finish it.
b) The test was hard, but I was able finish it.
c) The test was hard, but I could finished it.
d) The test was hard, but I did able to finish it.

29. Which question is correct?

a) Do you can help me with this?
b) Can you to help me with this?
c) Can you help me with this?
d) Are you can help me with this?

30. Which sentence is correct?

a) I can't visit her since May.
b) I haven't been able to visit her since May.
c) I haven't could visit her since May.
d) I couldn't visit her since May.

Answer Key

Can, Could and Be Able To · Explanations are shortened — the full interactive version is at gramvoy.com/exercises/can-could-be-able-to/

1. c) can ride
Can stays the same for every person, and the verb after it is the base…

2. b) can't
The negative of can is can't (cannot) + base form, with no do and no to.

3. c) Can … play
A question with can puts Can before the subject, with no do: Can your…

4. a) could run
Before my knee injury points to the past, and the past of can is could…

5. b) couldn't
Last night is past, so use couldn't + base form (or wasn't able to).

6. c) were able to
Be able to changes like be: my parents are they, so were able to.

7. b) be able to
Can has no future form, so after will use be able to + base form.

8. d) been able to find
Can has no participle, so the present perfect uses been able to: I…

9. a) Were … able
Yesterday needs the past of be: Were you able to…?

10. d) Could … swim
When you were seven is past, so the question is Could + subject + base…

11. b) can't
For staff only means it is not allowed, and can't says that: you can't…

12. a) Could … close
A polite request is Could you + base form…?

13. c) can't
A short answer repeats the modal of the question: Can you…?

14. d) couldn't
When he was young is past, so couldn't + base form.

15. b) were able to
Getting out through the smoke is one success on one occasion, so were…

16. a) were able to
After two hours… finally describes one success on one occasion, so were…

17. c) be able to
In standard English two modals can't stand together, so after should…

18. b) be able to
Can has no future form, so after won't (will not) use be able to: I…

19. c) haven't been able to
Since Tuesday runs from then until now, so the present perfect haven't…

20. d) can … sit
To ask for permission, put can before I and use the base form: Can I…

21. a) could … can't
When I was a child is general past ability — could; now is the present…

22. d) couldn't … be able to
Yesterday needs the past, couldn't.

23. a) been able to … be able to
Can has no participle, so after haven't use been able to — not could —…

24. c) couldn't … was able to
As a boy is general past ability — couldn't.

25. d) to be able to
After hope comes to + verb, and can has no to-form, so to be able to.

26. b) My cousin can play the violin.
Can has the same form for every person and is followed by the base…

27. d) Soon you will be able to speak English well.
Can has no future form, so after will use be able to: Soon you will be…

28. a) The test was hard, but I was able to finish it.
One success in the past takes was able to + base form: I was able to…

29. c) Can you help me with this?
Questions with can need no do and no be: Can you help me…?

30. b) I haven't been able to visit her since May.
Since May runs up to now, so the present perfect: I haven't been able…