



Can/Can't

Grammar Reference

Can / Can't

Can is a particular type of **auxiliary** verb, called **modal** verb.

Modal verbs express a specific character of a verb.

This modal verb has different meanings.

Can / Can't

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS:

a. It has the same form in all persons.

Eg. I can speak English, She can cook, They can dance.

b. There is NO do or does.

c. It is followed by the infinitive **without** to:

I can sing, We can't drive, Can you pass me the sugar?

Can / Can't

USES:

1. It is often used to express **ability or possibility**.
He can sing well. I can pass the exam.
2. It is also used to give and ask for **permission**.
You can go home after class.
Can I go to the toilet, please?
3. We also use it in **offers, requests and instructions**.
Can I help you? Can you help me?
When you finish Exercise 1, you can start Exercise 2.

CAN'T

It is the **contracted negative form** of can.

It has the **same structure as the positive form**.

I can't play the piano.

They can't cook very well.

He cannot swim.

Can't and cannot are the same, but can't is much more common in spoken English.