

Use of CAN and COULD

Positive sentence

Subject + CAN or COULD + Verb (first form of the verb)

NEGATIVE SENTENCES

Subject + CAN or COULD + NOT + Verb (first form of verb)

INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES

CAN or COULD+ Subject + Verb (first form of the verb)

1. To show Ability

CAN is used to describe that someone has the ability to do any task given to him. (Ability which is present)

COULD is used to describe that someone has the ability to do something in the past. (use in past Ability)

examples

Alisa can speak five languages.

Simon can drive a bus.

Use of CAN and COULD

2.To show Possibility

CAN. It is used to show present possibility.

COULD. It is used when we have to describe something that is possible in past.

examples

Siam can stay with us when he come.

A lot of crime could be prevented in the town.

3.To get Permission

CAN. It is used when we want to get permission for something. This is informal permission.

COULD is used to get permission in formal and polite way

examples

Can my son use your pen?

Could I take your grammar book, please?

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4. Use for Request

We use **CAN** when a question is asked. **COULD** is also used in a question. Question is in polite way.

examples

Can you make me hot coffee?

Could you lend me this Arabic book?

5. To make Offer

When we offer some help to someone, we use **CAN**. (It is called Informal Offer)

COULD is used when we want to make a suggestion. (For Suggestion)

examples

Can I help you to carry the luggage?

If Nisha want we could go out for shopping after office?