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ca, canned, canning, cans, could, Meanings Synonyms Sentences Used to indicate physical or mental ability. I can carry both suitcases. Can you remember the war? Used to indicate possession of a specified power, right, or privilege. The president can veto congressional bills. Used to indicate possession of a specified capability or skill. I can tune the harpsichord as well as play it. Used to indicate possibility or probability. I wonder if my long lost neighbor will still be alive. Such things can and do happen. Used to indicate that which is permitted by or by conscience or feelings. One can hardly blame you for being upset. More Verb Definitions (33) A be of various containers usually traditionally cylindrical, made of metal, and with a separate cover. A milk can, a garbage can, a can of shoe polish. A container made of tinned iron or other metal, in which foods and other perishable products are sealed for preservation. The contents of such a container. The amount that a can holds. More Noun Definitions (6) More Abbreviation Definitions (1) Something that is easily accomplished, especially a routine catch of a fly ball in baseball. A complex or difficult problem. Completed and ready for release, as a film or scene of a film, recorded, filmed, taped, etc, but not yet released for sale, exhibition, broadcast, viewing, etc. From Middle English canne, from Old English canne (glass, container, cup, can), from Proto-Germanic *kann (can, tankard, mug, cup), perhaps from Proto-Indo-European *gan-, *gand- (a vessel). Cognate with Scots can (can), West Frisian kanne (a jug, pitcher), Dutch kan (pot, mug), German Kanne (can, tankard, mug), Danish kanne (can, mug, a measure), Swedish kanna (can, tankard, mug), Icelandic kanna (a can). From Wiktionary From Middle English can (first and third person singular of cunnen, connen "to be able, know how") from Old English can(n), first and third person singular of cunnan (to know how), from Proto-Germanic *kunnan, from Proto-Indo-European, *nnh-. Compare Dutch kunnen, Low German knen, German knnen, Danish kunne. More at Conny, cunning. From Wiktionary Middle English first and third person sing. present tense of connen to know how from Old English cunnan gn- in Indo-European roots From American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 5th EditionMiddle English canne a water container Old English from American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 5th Edition "Can" is one of the most commonly used modal verbs in English. It can be used to express ability or opportunity, to request or offer permission, and to show possibility or probability. Examples: I can fix a horse. She can stay with my brother while we are away. My car can't stay out in the rain. Most modal verbs belong to the future. Study the chart below to learn how "can" behaves in different contexts. Modal Use Positive Forms:1 = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future Negative Forms:1 = Present 2. = Past 3. = Future Also, can can 1. I can speak Chinese. 2. SHIFT TO "COULD" could speak Chinese when I was a kid. 3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I will be able to speak Chinese by the time I finish my course. 1. I can't speak Swahili. 2. SHIFT TO "COULD" I couldn't speak Swahili. 3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I won't be able to speak Swahili. be able to can 1. With a burst of adrenaline, people can pick up cars. 2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" With a sudden burst of adrenaline, he was able to lift the car off the child's leg. 3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" With a sudden burst of adrenaline, he will be able to lift the car. 1. Even with a burst of adrenaline, people can't pick up something that heavy. 2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" Even the weight lifter, wasn't able to lift the car off the child's leg. 3. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" Even three men working together won't be able to lift the car. be able to can 1. I have some free time. I can help her now. 2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I had some free time yesterday. I was able to help her at that time. 3. I'll have some free time tomorrow. I can help her then. 1. I don't have any time. I can't help her now. 2. SHIFT TO "BE ABLE TO" I didn't have time yesterday. I wasn't able to help her at that time. 3. I won't have any time later. I can't help her then. be able to can 1. I can drive Susan's car when she is out of town. 2. SHIFT TO "BE ALLOWED TO" I was allowed to drive Susan's car while she was out of town last week. 3. I can drive Susan's car while she is out of town next week. 1. I can't drive Susan's car when she is out of town last week. 2. SHIFT TO "BE ALLOWED TO" I wasn't allowed to drive Susan's car while she was out of town last week. 3. I can't drive Susan's car while she is out of town next week. May I can I have a glass of water? Can you give me a lift to school? Can't I have a glass of water? Can't you give me a lift to school? could, may can Anyone can become rich and famous if they know the right people. Learning a language can be a real challenge. I can't cost more than a dollar or two. You can't be 45! I thought you were about 18 years old. can Exercises Learn English at Englishpage.com Also found in: Thesaurus, Medical, Financial, Acronyms, Idioms, Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, be able to, have power or skill. I can take a bus to the airport. She can paint very well. Not to be confused with:may to have permission to; you may go in now; to express possibility. The storm may turn into a hurricane.Abused, Confused, & Misused Words by Mary Embree Copyright 2007, 2013 by Mary Embree (kn; when unstressed)aux.v. past tense could (kood) 1. a. Used to indicate physical or mental ability. I can carry both suitcases. Can you remember the war?B. Used to indicate possession of a specified power, right, or privilege: The president can veto congressional bills.c. Used to indicate possession of a specified capability or skill: I can tune the harpsichord as well as play it.2. a. Used to indicate possibility or probability: I wonder if my long lost neighbor can still be alive. Such things can and do happen.b. Used to indicate that which is permitted, as by conscience or feelings: One can hardly blame you for being upset.c. Used to indicate probability or possibility under the specified circumstances: They can hardly have intended to do that.3. Usage Problem Used to request or grant permission: Can I be excused?Middle English, first and third person sing. present tense of connen, to know how, from Old English cunne; see gn- in Indo-European roots. Usage Note: Generations of grammarians and teachers have insisted that can should be used only to express the capacity to do something, and that may must be used to express permission. But children do not use can to ask permission out of a desire to be stubbornly perverse. They have learned it as an idiomatic expression from adults: After you clean your room, you can go outside and play. As part of the spoken language, this use of can is perfectly acceptable. This is especially true for negative questions, such as Can't I have the car tonight? probably because using mayn't instead of can't sounds unnatural. While the distinction between can and may still has its adherents in formal usage, the number appears to be falling. In our 2009 survey, 37 percent of the Usage Panel rejected can instead of may in the sentence Can I take another week to submit the application? But more than half of those said can was only "somewhat (rather than completely) unacceptable" in this use, and the overall percentage of disapproval fell from more than 50 percent in an earlier survey. The heightened formality of may sometimes highlights the speaker's role in giving permission. You may leave the room when you are finished implies that permission is given by the speaker. You can leave the room when you are finished implies that permission is part of a rule or policy rather than a decision on the speaker's part. For this reason, may sees considerable use in official announcements: Students may pick up the application forms tomorrow. Like may, can is also used to indicate what is possible: It may rain this afternoon. Bone spurs can be very painful. In this use, both can and may often have personal subjects: You may see him at the concert. Even an experienced driver can get lost in this town. (Kn)n. 1. A usually cylindrical metal container.2. An airtight container, usually made of tin-coated iron, in which foods or beverages are preserved.b. The contents of such a container: a can of beans.3. Slang A jail or prison.4. Slang A toilet or restroom.6. Slang A naval destroyer.v. catted, canning, cans, v.tr. 1. To seal in an airtight container for future use; preserve: canning peaches.2. Slang To make a recording of; can the audience's applause for a TV comedy show.3. Slang a. To end the employment of; fire. See Synonyms at dismiss.b. To put an end or stop to: cissoned the TV show after one season; told the students to can the chatter.intr. To solicit cash donations for a charity or other organization such as a club or amateur sports team by holding out a can or other container in a public place. Idioms: can of corn Sports Something that is easily accomplished, especially a routine catch of a fly ball in baseball. can of worms A complex or difficult problem. in the can Completed and ready for release, as a film or scene of a film.[Middle English canne, a water container, from Old English.]American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. (kn; unstressed kn) vb (intr, , past could1, used as an auxiliary to indicate ability, skill, or fitness to perform a task: I can run a mile in under four minutes. 2. used as an auxiliary to indicate permission or the right to do something: can I have a drink? 3. used as an auxiliary to indicate knowledge of how to do something: can he speak three languages fluently. 4. used as an auxiliary to indicate possibility, opportunity, or likelihood: my trainer says I can win the race if I really work hard. [Old English cunnan, Old High German kunnan, Latin cognoscere to know, Sanskrit jñti he knows; see ken, uncouth] (kn) n1. a container, esp. of liquids, usually of thin sheet metal: a petrol can; a beer can. 2. another name (esp US) for tin23. Also called: canful the contents of a can or the amount a can will hold4. a slang word for prison5. US and Canadian a slang word for toilet or buttocks. See toilet6. (Military) navy US a slang word for destroyer? (Military) navy slang a depth charge8. (Film) a shallow cylindrical metal container of varying size used for storing and handling film9. can of worms informal a complicated problem10. carry the can See carry3711. (film) (of a film, piece of music, etc.) having been recorded, processed, edited, etc12. informal arranged or agreed: the contract is almost in the can. vb, cans, canning or canned13. to put (food, etc) into a can or cans; preserve in a can14. (tr slang US) to dismiss from a job15. (tr informal US) to stop (doing something annoying or making an annoying noise) (esp in the phrase can it)!16. (tr informal) to reject or discard[Old English canne: related to Old Norse, Old High German kanna, Irish gann, Swedish kanna][Collins English Dictionary Complete and Unabridged, 12th Edition 2014 HarperCollins Publishers 1991, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2014] (kn; unstressed kn) auxiliary verb. 1. to be able to; to have the ability, power, or skill to: She can solve the problem easily. 2. to know how to: I can play chess, but not very well. 3. to have the power or means to: a dictator who can impose his will on the people. 4. to have the right or qualifications to: He can change whatever he wishes in the script. 5. may; have permission to: Can I speak to you for a moment? (6. to have the possibility: A coin can land on either side. v.t., v.i. to know; can but, to be able to do nothing else except; can only: We can but try. [before 900; Middle English, Old English, present, singul. 1st, 3rd person of cunnan to know, known] usage: can and may are often interchangeable in the sense of possibility: A power failure can (or may) occur at any time. Despite the traditional insistence that may conveys permission, both words are regularly used in this sense: Can (or May) I borrow your tape recorder? If you say that someone could do something, you mean that they have the ability to do it, but they don't do it. We could do much more in this country to educate people.3. ability: the past>You use could or a past form to be able to talk about ability in the past.He could run faster than anyone else.A lot of them couldn't read or write.I wasn't able to answer their questions.If you say that someone was able to do something, you usually mean that they had the ability to do it and they did it. 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