

Modals

Can/Could

Be able to

May/Might

Ability

Can

Could

Be able to

I can run very fast

I could run faster when I wasn't so tired

I was able to outrun my P.E. teacher once

I will be able to do it again if I start practicing

Probability

Can

Could

May

Might

It can happen

It couldn't happen even if we all wanted

He may be at home now

He might be at home, but I'm not sure

Permission

Can

Could

May

Might (SUPER POLITE)

Can you help me with this?

Could I borrow your book?

May I borrow your book?

I wonder if I might borrow your book

Can you ?

May I..... ?

Requests and offers

- Can I carry your bag? (**Not May!**)
 - How can I help you?
- We could go home if you're tired