



UNIT 7B · GENERAL A1

I can swim, but I can't drive

Class Book and Workbook · one complete unit

By the end you will...

- Talk about abilities using can / can't for physical and everyday skills
- Ask and answer questions with can: 'Can you swim?'
- Talk about rules and permission with can / can't in public places
- Use adverbs like 'well', 'a little', 'very well' with can
- Understand short conversations about rules in a swimming pool or library

Warm-up · What can you do?

Think about your skills. Answer with short sentences: 'I can...' or 'I can't...'.

- Say two things you can do well.
- Say one thing you can't do, but you want to learn.
- Can you cook? What can you cook?

1. Lead-in · Class survey: can you?

Stand up. Ask three classmates each question. Write their names.

- Can you swim? Yes, I can. / No, I can't.
- Can you drive a car?
- Can you cook a special dish? Which one?
- Can you play a musical instrument?
- Can you speak another language? Which one?

Report to the class: 'Marina can swim, but she can't drive.'

2. Reading · Three different people

Elena is a chef. She can cook very well, but she can't drive a car. She always goes to work by bike or by bus.

Marco is a swimming teacher. He can swim very well, of course, and he can also play the guitar a little. But he can't ski — he never learns because there is no snow near his city.

Yuki is a taxi driver. She can drive very well, day and night. She can also speak three languages, but she can't cook — she always eats in restaurants!

Comprehension

What can Elena do very well?

Why can't Marco ski?

What can't Yuki do?

2b. Words in the text

Match the word with the meaning.

- a chef
a person who cooks in a restaurant
- of course
you say this when something is obviously true
- snow
white and cold, falls in winter

- a taxi driver
a person who drives people for money

2c. Talk about the text

Answer in one or two sentences.

- Are you more like Elena, Marco or Yuki?
Answer key: Model: I'm more like Elena. I can cook well, but I can't drive.
- What can't you do, but you want to learn?
Answer key: Model: I can't ski, but I want to learn one day.

Young People Learn Old Skills

Source: Apex English · graded news-style report · Original text written for Apex English (A1 graded reader)

A short report about young people learning traditional skills.

Some young people today can't cook, sew or fix things. Many old skills are disappearing. But now, new classes are popular in some cities.

In these classes, young adults learn to cook simple meals, fix a bicycle, or make basic repairs at home. 'I can't cook at all,' says one student. 'After this class, I can make three real meals!'

Teachers say the classes are fun and useful. 'Everyone can learn,' says one teacher. 'You don't need special skills — you only need time and practice.'

1. READ FOR GIST

- What is the text about?
Answer key: New classes that teach young people old, practical skills.
- Why are the classes popular?
Answer key: Because many young people can't do simple practical things and want to learn.

2. READ FOR DETAIL

- What can the student do after the class?
Answer key: Cook three real meals.
- Name two skills people learn in the classes.
Answer key: Cooking and fixing a bicycle (or home repairs).
- What does the teacher say everyone needs?
Answer key: Only time and practice, not special skills.

3. GLOSSARY

sew

to make or fix clothes with a needle and thread

disappearing

slowly becoming less common

repair

to fix something broken

practice

doing something many times to get better

4. DISCUSS IN PAIRS

ASK THE TEACHER — notes to bring to class

- What practical skill can you do very well?
- What skill can't you do, but you would like to learn?

3. Vocabulary · Abilities

SET A

swim

move in water

drive

control a car

cook

prepare food

ski

move on snow with skis

play an instrument

guitar, piano, drums

speak a language

communicate in a language

SET B

Can you...?

ask about an ability

I can... very well.

say you are good at something

I can... a little.

say you have a little skill

I can't... at all.

say you have no skill

Practice

Complete with ONE word.

- Can you swim? — Yes, I can.
- She can cook very well.
- I can't ski. I never learn.
- He can play the guitar a little.
- They can speak three languages.

3b. Skill and place

Match the skill with the place where you use it.

- swim
in a pool

- cook
in a kitchen
- drive
on the road
- ski
on a mountain
- play football
on a field

4. Grammar · can / can't

Positive: can

Subject + can + verb (no -s, no 'to'). I can swim. She can cook. They can drive.

Negative: can't

Subject + can't + verb. I can't ski. He can't drive.

Questions

Can + subject + verb? Can you swim? Can she cook? — Yes, I can. / No, I can't.

Same form for everyone

No -s in third person: 'She can swim', NOT 'She cans swim'.

Adding detail

Use well, very well, a little: I can swim well. I can cook a little.

can for rules and permission

You can park here. You can't smoke in the library.

Short answers

Yes, I can. / No, I can't. Never say 'Yes, I can swim' as a short answer.

4a. can or can't?

Complete the sentence with can or can't, using the information.

- Elena is a chef. She ___ cook. (yes)
Answer key: can
- Elena doesn't drive. She ___ drive. (no)
Answer key: can't
- Marco teaches swimming. He ___ swim. (yes)
Answer key: can
- There's no snow. He ___ ski. (no)
Answer key: can't
- Yuki speaks three languages. She ___ speak French. (yes)
Answer key: can
- Yuki always eats out. She ___ cook. (no)
Answer key: can't

4b. Make questions

Write the question with can, then give a short answer for yourself.

- you / swim
Answer key: Can you swim? — Yes, I can. / No, I can't.
- you / drive
Answer key: Can you drive? — Yes, I can. / No, I can't.
- you / cook
Answer key: Can you cook? — Yes, I can. / No, I can't.
- you / play the guitar
Answer key: Can you play the guitar? — Yes, I can. / No, I can't.

4c. Rules with can / can't

Complete the rule for the place.

- In the library, you ___ talk loudly.
Answer key: can't
- In the park, you ___ walk your dog.
Answer key: can
- In this swimming pool, you ___ swim after 9pm.
Answer key: can't
- In this café, you ___ use the wifi for free.
Answer key: can

Look at the picture and use the grammar you just studied

Look at the sign. Write 4–5 sentences about what you can and can't do at this pool.

5. Listening · At the swimming pool

Two friends, Beatriz and Tomás, are at the swimming pool. Beatriz asks about the rules and about Tomás's abilities.

Two voices — no narrator introduction.

Before you listen

- Can you swim well?
- What rules do swimming pools usually have?

First listen — gist

- Where are Beatriz and Tomás?
Answer key: At a swimming pool.
- Can Tomás swim well?
Answer key: Yes, he can swim very well.

Second listen — detail

- Can you run near the pool?
Answer key: No, you can't. It's dangerous.
- What can children do only with an adult?
Answer key: Swim in the deep end.
- Can Beatriz dive?
Answer key: No, she can't. She's a little scared.

- What time does the pool close?

Answer key: At eight o'clock.

5b. Useful language

Match the phrase with the use.

- Can you swim well?
ask about an ability
- Yes, I can, very well.
answer positively with detail
- You can't run here.
say a rule
- I'm a little scared.
explain a feeling

6. Speaking · Can you...?

Work in pairs. Ask and answer about abilities and rules.

- New gym member
A: Ask three questions with 'Can I...?' about the gym rules.
B: Answer with 'Yes, you can' or 'No, you can't' and give a reason.
- Job interview
A: Ask the candidate about three skills for the job.
B: Answer honestly with can / can't and 'well' or 'a little'.

6b. Talk together

Ask and answer in pairs.

- What can you do very well?
- What can't you do, but a friend of yours can?
- Can you swim, ski or drive?
- What can't you do in a library or a cinema?

6c. Mini presentation · My abilities

Talk for 1 minute about your abilities.

- Say two things you can do very well
- Say one thing you can do a little
- Say one thing you can't do at all
- Say one skill you want to learn
- Finish with why that skill is useful

7. Writing · What I can and can't do

Write 40–50 words about your abilities. Use can and can't at least four times, and include one sentence about a rule in a place you know (a pool, a library, a gym).

WORKBOOK · HOME PRACTICE

Unit 7B Workbook

Do this after class. Answers are marked for your teacher.

1. Vocabulary gap-fill

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

- I can swim in the sea, but not very fast.
- She can drive a car, but only in the city.
- He can cook pasta very well.
- They can ski in the mountains every winter.
- I can play the guitar a little.
- My sister can cook very well.
- I can speak French a little.

2. can or can't?

Complete with can or can't, using the information.

- Elena is a chef. She ___ cook. (yes)
Answer key: can
- Marco doesn't ski. He ___ ski. (no)
Answer key: can't
- Yuki drives a taxi. She ___ drive. (yes)
Answer key: can
- Ben doesn't swim well. He ___ swim well. (no)
Answer key: can't
- I speak two languages. I ___ speak two languages. (yes)
Answer key: can
- They don't have a car. They ___ drive here. (no)
Answer key: can't
- She plays the piano. She ___ play the piano. (yes)
Answer key: can

3. Choose the correct sentence

Choose the grammatically correct sentence.

Choose the correct sentence.

Choose the correct question.

Choose the correct negative.

Choose the correct short answer.

Choose the correct rule sentence.

Choose the correct sentence.

4. Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Write it correctly.

- She cans drive very well.
Answer key: She can drive very well.
- Can you to swim?
Answer key: Can you swim?

- He can't to cook.
Answer key: He can't cook.
- Yes, I can swim.
Answer key: Yes, I can.
- You can't smoking here.
Answer key: You can't smoke here.
- I can play a little the guitar.
Answer key: I can play the guitar a little.

5. Listening · Three abilities

Three people talk about what they can and can't do. Listen for the skill.

- Speaker 1: what can he do very well?
Answer key: He can swim very well; he's a swimming teacher.
- Speaker 2: what can't she do?
Answer key: She can't drive; she always takes the bus.
- Speaker 3: what can they do a little?
Answer key: They can speak Italian a little.

6. Writing · What I can and can't do

Write 40–50 words about your abilities at work or at home. Use can and can't at least four times.

7. Reflection

Answer in one or two sentences.

- Which skill do you want to learn? Why?
Answer key: Model: I want to learn to swim because I love the sea.
- Write one rule with can/can't from a place you know.
Answer key: Model: In the library, you can't talk loudly.