Grammar

**1 Asking for permission**

When we ask for permission to do something, we use the modals can, could, may, and might. These words have different levels of formality.

- **Can** we join you for lunch? (informal)
- **Could** we join you for lunch? (less informal)
- **May** we join you for lunch? (more formal)
- **Might** we join you for lunch? (very formal)

We can also use *would* / *do you mind* to ask for permission:

- **Would** you mind my joining you for dinner?
- **Do you mind** if I join you for dinner?

**Grammar exercises**

1. **Complete these sentences with one of the phrases in the box.**

   - **asking for permission**
   - **making an offer**
   - **making a request**
   - **making a suggestion**

   1. "Why don't you take a 30-minute break?" The speaker is ______
   2. "Could you bring two more glasses of iced tea, please?" The speaker is ______
   3. "May I go home early today?" The speaker is ______
   4. "Can you get me on an early morning flight out of Manila tomorrow?" The speaker is ______
   5. "How about adding some music to our advertisement?" The speaker is ______
   6. "Can I take a copy of this newsletter?" The speaker is ______
   7. "I could fix that broken window for you." The speaker is ______

2. **Complete Mr. Hirano’s part of a phone conversation with a customer using phrases from the box.**

   - Can I book...?
   - Could I suggest...?
   - Could you speak...?
   - Let me look...?
   - Would you like...?
   - Would you mind...?

   Good morning, Tyler’s Bistro. 1 Can I help you? ... 2 Hello, hello. 2 ______ another reservation for a different day? ... Yes, of course. 4 ______ a table on Thursday night at 6:30 P.M.? Yes, good.... I’ll make the reservation for five people.... Ah, I see. You would like a table for seven. 5 ______ holding the line for a second? I’ll just check the reservation book.... I’m sorry, Mr. Clark. I’m afraid I can’t reserve a table for seven at that time. We’re fully booked. 6 ______ to be sure. Ah, here’s a free table. 7 ______ 7:30 P.M.? ... Good. That’s excellent. I’ll have a table ready for you at 7:30 on Thursday, for a party of seven then.

3. **Anita and Evelyn are discussing going out to eat. Their suggestions contain errors. Find the errors and correct them.**

   Ada: I Why do we go out for a meal and a movie after work today?
   Marybeth: That’s a good idea. 2 How about to going to that Chinese restaurant that everyone’s talking about?
   Ada: 3 Can / Co I suggest we go there? 4 Yes, let’s can go there. It’s within walking distance of the movie theater as well.
   Marybeth: 4 Should we be look at the website to see what’s playing?
   Ada: 5 Could / Co I book we just to pass the movie theater on our way to the restaurant?
   Marybeth: Yes, that sounds like a great idea. 6 What about invite the new trainee?
   Ada: Sure. Why not? She seems really nice.