

# Difference Between Able and Capable — Practice Worksheet

Grammar and vocabulary practice for B2 First / C1 Advanced learners

Name: _____	Date: _____	Score: ____ / 44
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<b>Pattern 1</b>	<b>able + to + infinitive</b> Example: She was able to solve the problem.
<b>Pattern 2</b>	<b>capable of + noun / -ing form</b> Example: She is capable of solving difficult problems.

**Teacher tip:** Use *able* when you mean can do something. Use *capable* when you mean having the qualities or potential to do something well.

## A. Choose the correct word

Complete each sentence with *able*, *capable*, *unable*, *incapable*

1. Even after a long journey, Marta was still \_\_\_\_\_ to finish the report that evening.
2. The old bridge is not \_\_\_\_\_ of supporting heavy traffic any more.
3. Tom was \_\_\_\_\_ to answer the final question, although he knew the earlier ones.
4. She is perfectly \_\_\_\_\_ of managing the whole project on her own.
5. After the accident, he was \_\_\_\_\_ to drive for several months.
6. The machine is \_\_\_\_\_ of processing thousands of images in a few minutes.
7. I don't think Ben is \_\_\_\_\_ of being deliberately rude; he is usually very thoughtful.
8. With a little more practice, you will be \_\_\_\_\_ to speak much more confidently.
9. The team was \_\_\_\_\_ to win despite playing brilliantly for most of the match.
10. This software is \_\_\_\_\_ of detecting even very small mistakes.
11. Are you \_\_\_\_\_ to stay a bit later and help us tidy up?
12. She seemed \_\_\_\_\_ of understanding how upset her comment had made him.

## B. Complete with the correct form

Use the words in brackets. Pay attention to the pattern.

1. I wasn't \_\_\_\_\_ the door because I had left the key inside. (open)
2. This device is \_\_\_\_\_ energy use automatically. (reduce)
3. Were you \_\_\_\_\_ everyone before the meeting started? (contact)
4. The new assistant is \_\_\_\_\_ difficult customers politely. (deal with)
5. At the age of three, Lucy was already \_\_\_\_\_ simple words. (read)
6. Do you think this car is \_\_\_\_\_ 200 kilometres per hour? (reach)
7. After the operation, he was not \_\_\_\_\_ properly for a few days. (walk)
8. I know she is \_\_\_\_\_ a much more senior role in the company. (take on)
9. We were finally \_\_\_\_\_ a table near the window. (get)
10. No one believed that he was \_\_\_\_\_ such a cruel thing. (say)

## C. Correct the mistake

Each sentence contains one mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. She is able of speaking three languages fluently.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. This printer is capable to print on both sides of the paper.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. We weren't capable to find the address in the dark.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Is your nephew able of swimming yet?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Nobody thought he was able of such dishonesty.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. I'm sorry, but I won't be capable to come tomorrow morning.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The athlete was able of finishing the race despite the injury.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Are you capable to help me carry these boxes upstairs?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### D. Rewrite using the word given

Do not change the word in capitals.

1. She can solve very complex problems. (CAPABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. We managed to finish the project on time. (ABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. This lift can carry twelve people. (CAPABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

4. He can't understand why they are angry. (UNABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

5. No one thought she would behave so badly. (CAPABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. I managed to speak to the head teacher yesterday. (ABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

7. The child can now tie his own shoelaces. (ABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

8. This team can achieve much more with proper training. (CAPABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_

### E. Mixed challenge

Complete the short text with suitable forms of *able, capable, unable, incapable*. Use each answer only where it fits naturally.

When Ella first joined the company, she was not (1) \_\_\_\_\_ handle difficult clients on her own. However, everyone could see that she was (2) \_\_\_\_\_ becoming an excellent manager. Within a few months, she was (3) \_\_\_\_\_ deal with complaints calmly and efficiently. She also proved that she was not (4) \_\_\_\_\_ making tough decisions when necessary. By the end of the year, even the director said she was (5) \_\_\_\_\_ leading the whole department. Only once was she (6) \_\_\_\_\_ attend an important meeting, because she was ill.

### F. Optional writing practice

Write 5–6 sentences about someone you admire. Use *able, capable*, and one negative form (*unable* or *incapable*).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Answer key**

<b>A. Choose the correct word</b>	<b>B. Complete with the correct form</b>
1. able	1. able to open
2. capable	2. capable of reducing
3. unable	3. able to contact
4. capable	4. capable of dealing with
5. unable	5. able to read
6. capable	6. capable of reaching
7. capable	7. able to walk
8. able	8. capable of taking on
9. unable	9. able to get
10. capable	10. capable of saying
11. able	
12. incapable	

**C. Correct the mistake**

1. She is able to speak three languages fluently.
2. This printer is capable of printing on both sides of the paper.
3. We weren't able to find the address in the dark.
4. Is your nephew able to swim yet?
5. Nobody thought he was capable of such dishonesty.
6. I'm sorry, but I won't be able to come tomorrow morning.
7. The athlete was able to finish the race despite the injury.
8. Are you able to help me carry these boxes upstairs?

**D. Rewrite using the word given**

1. She is capable of solving very complex problems.

2. We were able to finish the project on time.
3. This lift is capable of carrying twelve people.
4. He is unable to understand why they are angry.
5. No one thought she was capable of behaving so badly.
6. I was able to speak to the head teacher yesterday.
7. The child is now able to tie his own shoelaces.
8. This team is capable of achieving much more with proper training.

**E. Mixed challenge**

1. able to
2. capable of
3. able to
4. incapable of
5. capable of
6. unable to

*Optional writing practice: answers will vary.*