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could so you can avoid grammatical mistakes by the time we re done you II feel confident to use both words in your online english grammar classes with preply used to express possibility especially slight or uncertain possibility a lot of crime could be prevented she could arrive anytime now this new drug could be an important step in the fight against cancer could have be careful with that stick you could have hit your sister from english grammar today could form affirmative form could comes first in the verb phrase after the subject and before another verb we could have lunch early could cannot be used with another modal verb we could drive to france not we could might drive to france or we might could drive to france negative form can and could are modal verbs that express possibility or ability they re also used to make a request or ask for permission when referring to ability or possibility can is used for present scenarios whereas could is used in the past tense i can translate that for you 1 modal verb you use could to indicate that someone had the ability to do something you use could not or couldn t to say that someone was unable to do something for my return journey i felt i could afford the extra and travel first class i could see that something was terribly wrong he could not resist telling her the truth can is an auxiliary verb a modal auxiliary verb we use can to talk about possibility and ability make requests ask for or give permission structure of can the basic structure for can is the main verb is always the bare infinitive infinitive without to notice that can is invariable there is only one form can the meaning of could is used in auxiliary function in the past in the past conditional and as an alternative to can suggesting less force or certainty or as a polite form in the present how to use could in a sentence modals could and couldn t do you want to practise using the modals could and couldn t in english help modals could and couldn t we can use could and couldn t to talk about abilities in the past i could swim when i was four she couldn t ride a bike when she was three he could walk when he was two how to use them could is the past tense of can a verb used to denote ability in this sense could refers to some ability that someone had in the past for example in high school i could dunk a basketball in my prime i could bench press 250 pounds in both of these examples could is being used to express an ability that the speaker had in the past could is used for past ability and possibility we couldn t finish the project on time she could read when she was three years old could is neutrally used for offers and requests could you open the door for me please be able to is used for present past and future ability and possibility are you able to swim 1 i tried to find the difference between following two sentences i could do it i could have done it i am still confused between these two sentences please let me know what is the difference between them in context meaning in context modal verbs share could do with definition and meaning collins english dictionary summary definitions synonyms pronunciation collocations conjugations sentences grammar definition of could do with could do with phrase if you say that you could do with something you mean that you need it or would benefit from it i could do with a cup of tea meaning of could do with something in english could do with something idiom informal add to word list if something could do with something it needs it very much this place could do with a good cleaning smart vocabulary related words and phrases wanting things ache for something acquisitive ambitiously angle for something desperate april 18 2024 subscribe to our weekly newsletter do you need more motivation and inspiration for new things look no further this list of fun and exciting activities is bound to have something for everyone 10 best things to do today there are so many fun things you can do 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