

Was Able To

Point 1: The phrase "be able to" refers to the ability to do something in the past, present, and future tense.

1. I was not able to finish.
2. We were able to get there on time.
3. I am not able to finish my dinner.
4. I will not be able to attend the meeting.

Point 2: The modal "could" can also be used to express the ability to do something in the past, but it is usually used in the negative form.

1. I couldn't answer all the problems on the test.
2. We couldn't get the room we wanted at the hotel.
3. We couldn't see the stage from our seats.
4. They couldn't attend the party. Their daughter was sick.

Point 3: Both forms are used to make questions, but the phrase 'was able to' is more commonly used.

1. Were you able to get tickets to the concert?
2. Could you get the seats you wanted?
3. Was Mary able to finish on time?
4. Was the hotel able to handle your request?

Point 4: The subject and "be" verbs apply for all sentences and questions.

- **Were** you able to finish?
 - Yes, I **was**.
- **Were** they able to attend the party?
 - Yes, they **were**.

Point 5: The particle "to" is heavily reduced and sounds like /ta/ when spoken naturally. We were not able /ta/ buy the house.

He wasn't able /ta/ close the deal.

My company wasn't able /ta/ renew our lease for our office.

Most students were not able /ta/ pass the class.

Was able to

Watch four videos using the modal "was able to" in conversation.

Conversation 1 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Woman: How did you do on the test?

Man: Not great. I **wasn't able to** answer all the questions. I ran out of time.

Woman: Same here. Some of the questions were really hard.

Man: **Were** you **able to** finish the essay section?

Woman: Yeah, I **was able to** do that, at least.

Man: Me too, although I **wasn't able to** write 300 words.

Woman: Me neither! How many words did you write?

Man: I **was** only **able to** write about 200 words.

Woman: Same! Well, fingers crossed we get a good grade.

Man: Yes, fingers crossed!

Conversation 2 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Man: So, how is the wedding planning coming along?

Woman: Good, we have finalized most of the arrangements.

Man: Are you still having the wedding at the lake?

Woman: No, we **weren't able to** get the place we wanted.

Man: Oh, then where are you having it then?

Woman: We are having it at a hotel in the countryside.

Man: Well, it sounds nice.

Woman: Yeah, in the end, it worked out well. We **were able to** get a really good deal on the caterer, too.

Man: Oh, that's great! I am glad to hear it.

Conversation 3 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Man: I am sorry I **wasn't able to** attend your birthday party on Saturday.

Woman: Yeah, what happened? We were expecting you.

Man: Well, my babysitter canceled and I **wasn't able to** find a replacement.

Woman: Oh, that's too bad. Maybe next time.

Man: Well, I really wanted to go. I'm sorry I **couldn't** make it.

Woman: No worries. Some other people **couldn't** make it also.

Man: Oh, good. I am glad I was not the only one.

Conversation 4 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Woman: Before I forget, how was your trip to New York?

Man: It was fun. We saw a lot.

Woman: Did you see the Statue of Liberty?

Man: No, we **weren't able to** get tickets for the ferry.

Woman: What about the Empire State Building? I hope you **were able to** see that.

Man: We **were able to** go there, but we **weren't able to** go to the top.

Woman: Oh no, why not?

Man: It was closed for maintenance or something.

Woman: Oh that's too bad.

Man: Well, I am sure I'll be able to go back someday!

Quiz

Answer these questions about the interview.

1) Was the woman able to answer all the questions?

a) Yes, she was.

b) No, she was not.

2) Where will they have the wedding?

a) The lake

b) The countryside

3) What was the man not able to do?

a) Attend the party

b) Call the babysitter

4) What did the woman visit?

a) The Statue of Liberty

b) The Empire State Building

Gap Fill: Listen to the audio. Type in the correct word!

Conversation 1

Woman: How did you do **in/on** the test?

Man: Not great. I wasn't able to **answer/answered** all the questions. I ran out of time.

Woman: Same here. Some of the **questions/question** were really hard.

Man: Were you able to **finish/finished** the essay section?

Woman: Yeah, I was able to do that, at **last/least**.

Man: Me too, although I wasn't able to **write/wrote** 300 words.

Woman: Me **too/neither**! How many words did you write?

Man: I was only able to write **about/above** 200 words.

Woman: Same! Well, fingers crossed we get a good **grade/grades**.

Man: Yes, **fingers/finger** crossed!

Conversation 2

Man: So, how is the wedding **planning/planned** coming along?

Woman: Good, we have **finalizing/finalized** most of the arrangements.

Man: Are you **still/yet** having the wedding at the lake?

Woman: No, we weren't able to **got/get** the place we wanted.

Man: Oh, then where are you having it **then/than**?

Woman: We are having it at a hotel in **the/a** countryside.

Man: Well, it **sound/sounds** nice.

Woman: Yeah, in the end, it worked **over/out** well. We were able to get a really good deal on the **cater/caterer**, too.

Man: Oh, that's great! I am glad to **hear/hearing** it.

Conversation 3

Man: I am sorry I wasn't able to **attend/attending** your birthday party on Saturday.

Woman: Yeah, what happened? We were **expecting/expect** you.

Man: Well, my babysitter **canceled/cancel** and I wasn't able to find a replacement.

Woman: Oh, that's too bad. May **be/Maybe** next time.

Man: Well, I really wanted to go. I'm sorry I couldn't **made/make** it.

Woman: No **worries/worry**. Some other people couldn't make it also.

Man: Oh, good. I am glad I was not the only one.

Conversation 4

Woman: Before I forget, **how/where** was your trip to New York?

Man: It was fun. We **seen/saw** a lot.

Woman: Did you see the Statue **at/of** Liberty?

Man: No, we weren't able to **got/get** tickets for the ferry.

Woman: What about the Empire State Building? I hope you were able to **see/saen** that.

Man: We were able to go there, but we weren't able to **gone/go** to the top.

Woman: Oh no, **why/how** not?

Man: It was closed for maintenance or **somewhere/something**.

Woman: Oh that's too bad.

Man: Well, I am **sure/surely** I'll be able to go back someday!

Corporate Vocabulary - Operations and Logistics

Supply chain: The network between a company and its suppliers to produce and distribute a product.

Inventory: A complete list of items in stock.

Outsource: To obtain goods or services from an outside supplier.

Streamline: To make a system or organization more efficient and effective.

Quality control: A system of maintaining standards in manufactured products.