

Could-More uses

Could is used as the past of can

Example:

She has an amazing office. She can see the whole city from her window. (present)

She had an amazing office. She could see the whole city from her window.(past)

The modal verb **Could** is also used in present to discuss possible actions in the present or future.

Example:

I could take a trip to the beach on Saturday.

I could sit here all day looking into the sea.

I could clean my house on my day off.

These statements all speculate about present or future possibilities.

Study the difference between could and can:

I can take next week off (reality).

I could take next week off (suggestion).

Compare: Could + infinitive (present) or Could + have + participle verb (verb column 3):

I could talk to her forever. (Present)

I could have talked to her forever. (past possibility).

I'm so tired I could sleep for hours. (present)

I was so tired, I could have slept for hours. (past)

Don't forget couldn't-

Couldn't + infinitive (present) or Couldn't + have + participle verb (verb column 3):

I couldn't live without my cat. (present)

When I was young, I couldn't have lived without my cat. (past)

I couldn't go to the concert. (present)

Practice:

Answer these questions:

- 1.) Where should I visit in Brazil?
- 2.) Where should I go for dinner tonight?
- 3.) When should I get up in the morning?

Possible answers: 1.) You could visit Natal. 2.) You could go to Batel. 3.) You could get up at 7 AM.

Decide whether to use can or could:

- 1.) I have so much work to do. I _____ work all day and it still wouldn't all be done.
- 2.) He _____ use Microsoft office as well as Photoshop.
- 3.) She's one of my best friends. I _____ tell her just about anything.
- 4.) This meeting _____ take all day so make sure you don't schedule anything else to do.
- 5.) School is pretty easy right now but it _____ get harder later in the semester.

Answers: 1.) could 2.) can 3.) can 4.) could 5.) could

Complete these sentences:

1.) Something you could do tonight _____

2.) Something you could have done last night _____

3.) A place you could go tomorrow _____

4.) A place you could have gone last night _____

5.) A subject you could study _____

6.) A subject you could have studied when you were in school

7.) A language you could speak _____

8.) A language you could have spoken _____

Complete these sentences:

9.) I couldn't live in _____

10.) I couldn't have done better on _____.

Possible Answers: 1.) *I could go to bed early.* 2.) *I could have gone to bed early.* 3.) *I could go to the park.*
4.) *I could have gone to the park.* 5.) *I could study Mythology.* 6.) *I could have studied Mythology.* 7.) *I*
could speak French. 8.) *I could have spoken French.*