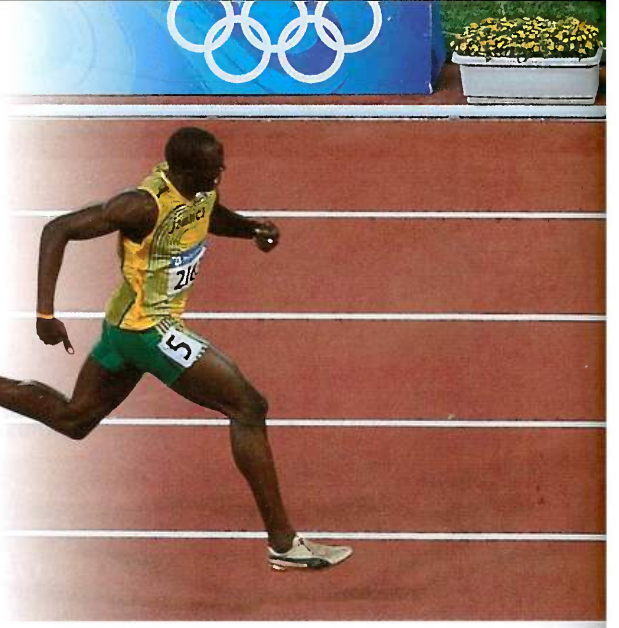
61 can/can't



1 Form

SUBJECT	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
I/He/She/It/We/You/They	*can run.*	*cannot (can't) run.*

QUESTIONS	SHORT ANSWERS
Can I/he/she/it/we/you/they run?	*Yes, I/he/she/it/we/you/they can.* *No, I/he/she/it/we/you/they can't.*

Modal verbs are different from main verbs.

⚠ We use the infinitive without *to* after them:
✗ ~~*We can to come to your party.*~~ ✓ *We **can come** to your party.*

⚠ We don't add *-s* after *he/she/it*:
✗ ~~*Marek cans swim.*~~ ✓ *Marek **can swim.***

⚠ We do not use *do/don't* to form questions and negatives:
✗ ~~*Do you can drive?*~~ ✓ ***Can** you **drive**?*
✗ ~~*I don't can speak Spanish.*~~ ✓ *I **can't speak** Spanish.*

Past and future forms of *can/can't* ➤ Unit 62

Pronunciation ➤ 1.24

2 Use

We use *can/can't*

- to talk about ability in the present:
  *Usain Bolt **can run** really fast.*
  *I **can speak** Spanish perfectly.*
  *Young children **can't understand** difficult ideas.*
- to say if something is possible or allowed in the present:
  *We **can watch** the race on my mobile phone.* (= It is possible for us to watch the race.)
  ***Can I use** this mobile phone in the USA?* (= Is it possible for me to use it?)
  *Students **can use** dictionaries in the exam.* (= It is allowed.)
  *You **can't drive** in the UK until you are seventeen.* (= You are not allowed to drive.)
- for making an arrangement:
  *The doctor **can see** you tomorrow at 10.30.*
  ***Can** you **meet** me here at nine o'clock on Sunday?*