

# able

S1 W1

/ˈeɪbəl/

adjective

## 1 be able to do something

a) CAN

to have the skill, strength, knowledge etc needed to do something:

*I've always wanted to be able to speak Japanese.*

b) CAN

to be in a situation in which it is possible for you to do something:

*I'd like to do more gardening, but I never seem able to find the time.*

*I haven't been able to read that report yet.*

## 2 GOOD AT clever or good at doing something:

*one of my more able students*

### Word origin

**Date:** 1300–1400

**Language:** Old French

**Origin:** Latin *habilis* 'skillful', from *habere* 'to have'

# -able

/əbəl/

(also **-ible**)

suffix [in adjectives]

## 1 that you can do something to:

*washable* (= it can be washed)

*unbreakable* (= it cannot be broken)

*loveable* (= easy to love)

## 2 having a particular quality or condition:

*knowledgeable* (= knowing a lot)

*comfortable*

— **-ably** /əbli/, **-ibly** **suffix** [in adverbs] :

*unbelievably*

**Word origin**

**Language:** Old French

**Origin:** Latin *-abilis*, from *-bilis* 'capable or worthy of'

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