1. Ask for help
Read the dialogue, and practice with a partner.

A: Would you mind lending me a hand?
B: Sure. What can I do for you?
A: Could you hold the door open for me?
B: No problem. Is there anything else?
A: Actually, there’s a door downstairs, too. Could you get that one as well?
B: Of course.

2. Offer to help
Read the dialogue, and practice with a partner.

A: Is there anything I can do to help?
B: Not at the moment, thank you.
B: There is one thing you could do.
A: Just say the word.
B: Would you mind closing the windows?
A: Of course not.

3. Lend a hand
Change the information in bold to create a new dialogue. Practice again.

A: Those boxes looks heavy. Can I give you a hand?
B: I’m okay. You could hold the door for me, though.
A: No problem. Can I take something for you?
B: That’s okay. They aren’t as heavy as they look.
A: Is there anything else I can do?
B: Sure. You could open the trunk of my car.
4. Sentence Building
Choose the correct word to complete the requests.

1. (Do/Can)____________I ask you a favor?

2. Could you (to lend/lend) __________me a hand?

3. I wonder if you could (help/to help) _______me.

4. (Can/Do) ______ you have a spare moment?

5. I could (use/to use)______________ your help for a second.

Tip: favor = American spelling
      favour = British/Canadian spelling

Can I ask a favor?          Can you do me a favor?          I have a favor to ask you.
Sometimes people will say: “I need a big favor.”

For Example:
A: I have a big favor to ask you.
B: Okay. What is it?
A: Could you mow our lawn while we’re away?
5. Speaking Practice
Take turns asking for help with these tasks.

1. Move boxes
2. Make dinner
3. Read my writing
4. Look after my dog
5. Pick up my mail

6. Sorry I can’t help
There are different expressions to use when you can’t help a person. You can choose whether or not to add a reason.

Sorry

• I wish I could, but I can’t.
  (Add a reason if you want to.)

• I’m sorry. I’m busy right now.
  (Use this for an immediate request.)

• I’m sorry. I’m not available.
  (Use this for a request in the future.)

For Example:
A: I’m sorry. I’m working right now. (reason)
OR
A: I wish I could, but I can’t. (no specific reason)

My Life
Change the dialogue to a request you made recently. Try your dialogue with a partner.

A: Can I ask you a big favor?
B: Sure, what is it?
A: I need to borrow twenty dollars.
B: Oh, I’m sorry. I’m broke.

Note: to be broke = to have no money

Me: I have a favor to ask you.
_________: What can I do for you?
Me: I need you to ________________.
_________: I wish I could help, but
___________________.
Me: Oh, that’s okay. Don’t worry about it.
Exercise 1. Read out loud or in pairs.

Exercise 2. Answers may vary.
A: Is there anything I can do to help?
B: Not at the moment, thank you.
B: There is one thing you could do.
A: Just say the word.
B: Would you mind closing the windows?
A: Of course not.

Exercise 3. Read out loud or in pairs.

Exercise 4. Sentence Building
Choose the correct word to complete the requests.

1. Can I ask you a favor?
2. Could you lend me a hand?
3. I wonder if you could help me.
4. Do you have a spare moment?
5. I could use your help for a second.