

‘-kan’ to make transitive verbs and benefactive verbs

‘-kan’ is used to form many transitive verbs.

For one large group, *-kan* is simply needed for the verb to be formed correctly. Although the *-kan* has no obvious meaning it must be there. Examples:

Kami memikirkan hal itu.	We thought about the matter.	[not: “ <i>memikir</i> hal itu”]
Mereka membicarakan seni.	They discussed art.	[not: “ <i>membicara</i> seni”]
Gina mengerjakan PR-nya.	Gina did her homework.	[not: “ <i>mengerja</i> PR-nya”]

Some of this group have a matching *intransitive* verb without “-kan”. Example:

Kami	memikirkan	hal itu.	We thought about the matter.
	berpikir	tentang	

In such pairs, the transitive “-kan” verb has an advantage over its intransitive ‘twin’; namely, it allows you to focus on either the Actor *or* the Undergoer. So (e.g.) you can say either:

<u>Kami</u> memikirkan hal itu.	OR	<u>Hal itu</u> kami pikirkan.
[= focus on the Actor: “Kami”]		[= focus on the Undergoer: “Hal itu”]

But if you use the intransitive verb, like ‘berpikir’ you cannot focus on the Undergoer. There is no Undergoer. So you could not begin with “Hal itu...”. Instead, you must focus on the Actor, and say “KAMI berpikir tentang hal itu.”

‘-kan’ can also be added to some verbs that are *already* transitive. In these cases, *-kan* shows that the action is done for someone. E.g.

Edy membeli koran untuk ibunya.	
OR	Edy bought a paper for his mother.
Edy membelikan ibunya koran.	

Saya membawa secangkir kopi untuk Ririn.	
OR	I brought a cup of coffee for Ririn.
Saya membawakan Ririn secangkir kopi.	

Look more closely at this type of sentence.

Actor	verb + <i>-kan</i>	person it is done for	the object
Edy	membelikan	ibunya	koran.

When it is obvious whom the action is done for, that person is often not mentioned. Examples:

Wayan mengetuk dua kali, dan Bu Tuti membukakan pintu. (i.e. opened it *for* Wayan).

(to a waiter): Tolong bawakan sebotol bir. (i.e. bring it *for* us)

Note: Very often when speaking, Indonesians use both ‘-kan’ *and* ‘untuk’ to show that the action is done for someone else (e.g. “Edy membelikan koran **untuk** ibunya.”). But not all educated speakers regard this as correct.

Exercise 1. Use *-kan* to make a correctly formed transitive verb from each word below:

ada (there is/are)	bicara (to talk)	pikir (to think)	tinggal (to remain)
butuh (need)	lupa (to forget)	peduli (to care)	ingin (to want)
tanya (to ask)	kerja (to work)	laku (a deed)	

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| 1. Kita harus mengerjakan latihan 3 dan 4. | We have to do exercises 3 and 4. |
| 2. Mereka menginginkan kemerdekaan. | They want independence. |
| 3. Dia menanyakan kursus Bahasa Italia. | She asked about Italian courses. |
| 4. Mereka memerlukan obat-obatan. | They need medicine. |
| 5. Sri sudah melupakan pacarnya yang dulu. | Sri has forgotten her old boyfriend. |
| 6. Dia melakukan pembunuhan itu. | He carried out that murder. |
| 7. Kami mau mengadakan pesta minggu depan. | We'll hold a party next week. |
| 8. Dia tidak mem(p)edulikan keluarganya. | He doesn't care about his family. |
| 9. Kami membicarakan masalah kesehatan. | We discussed health problems. |
| 10. Bu Subroto meninggalkan suaminya. | Bu Subroto left her husband. |
| 11. Endah jarang memikirkan masa depan. | Endah rarely thinks about the future. |

Exercise 2. Say it two ways, using a transitive *-kan* verb both times.

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| 1 a) Saya harus memikirkan soal itu. | I have to think about that |
| b) Soal itu harus saya pikirkan . | problem. [PIKIR] |
| 2 a) Saya tidak bisa melupakan kecelakaan itu. | I can't forget that |
| b) Kecelakaan itu tidak bisa saya lupakan . | accident. [LUPA] |
| 3a) "Nasib kita tidak mereka pedulikan "!" | "They don't care about |
| b) "Mereka tidak mem(p)edulikan nasib kita !"' | our fate!" [PEDULI] |
| 4a) Anda harus mengerjakan tugas itu sekarang. | You have to do that job |
| b) Tugas itu harus Anda kerjakan sekarang. | now. [KERJA] |
| 5a) Banyak orang yang menanyakan wanita itu. | A lot of people ask about |
| b) Wanita itu ditanyakan oleh banyak orang. | that woman. [TANYA] |
| 6a) Apa yang akan kita bicarakan ? | What are we going to |
| b) Kita akan membicarakan apa? | discuss? [BICARA] |

Exercise 3. Use '*-kan*' instead of '*untuk*' to say that the action is done *for* someone.

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| 1. Saya meminta sebuah karcis untuk Hadi. | Saya memintakan Hadi sebuah karcis. |
| 2. Dewi membuka pintu untuk Anwar. | Dewi membukakan Anwar pintu. |
| 3. Saya mengambil makanan untuk kakek. | Saya mengambulkan kakek makanan. |
| 4. Pak Agus membeli sepeda untuk anaknya. | Pak Agus membelikan anaknya sepeda. |
| 5. Tono brought a glass of tea for his brother. | Tono membawakan kakaknya segelas teh. |

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| 6. Sri wrote an essay for Hadi. | Sri menuliskan Hadi sebuah esai. |
| 7. Bu Murti looked for a husband for her child. | Bu Murti mencarikan anaknya suami. |
| 8. Ida makes clothes for her sisters. | Ida membuatkan adiknya baju. |

Exercise 4. Use *-kan* to show that the action is for someone else, but do not mention that person.

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| 1. Sekretaris masuk kantor Presiden membawakan kertas-kertas. | [bringing papers for him.] |
| 2. Jon meminta anak itu membawakan / mengambilkan rokok. | [to get him some cigarettes.] |
| 3. Di Sydney dia membelikan dua buku. | [bought two books for me.] |
| 4. Sebelum Dewi pindah kota, temannya mencarikan rumah. | [looked for a house for her.] |
| 5. Tolong bukakan pintu. | [open the door for me.] |
| 6. (to a waiter): Tolong bawakan satu kursi lagi. | [bring one more chair for us.] |
| 7. (to hotel servant): Tolong cucikan baju ini. | [wash these clothes for me.] |
| 8. (to police officer): Tolong carikan anak saya! | [look for my child for me!] |

[Note: the verb prefix “*meN-*” tends to be dropped in imperatives, i.e. commands, as in items 5—8 above.]