Potential complements

'Can' may also be expressed by a potential complement

The form is:
affirmative: Verb de [Potential Complement]
negative: Verb bu [Potential Complement]

Which potential complement to use depends on the verb.

It is easier to understand by looking at examples:

Nàge xingzi zhòng de nábudòng.
'That suitcase is too heavy to carry.'
So ná 'carry' takes the potential complement dòng to produce 'can carry'.

There may be some exceptions to this rule, but most resultative complements and directional complements may be turned into potential complements by inserting de after the first character (or bu for the negative form).

Ch
Chái
Dào
Dòng
Jí
 Jiàn
Lái
Lio
Q
Qù
Wán
Xià
Zháo

See also

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