

2 Housing

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There are many kinds of houses where people can live or stay. Some people prefer living in **blocks of flats** (apartment buildings in American English), which is usually cheaper. Single people can also live in a **bed-sit**. A **bungalow** is a small **one-storey** house preferred usually by elderly people as there are no stairs. A **terraced house** is a house that shares its walls on either side with other houses most of which are the same. A **semi-detached house** shares one wall with another house and a **detached house** stands on its own (sometimes surrounded by a garden). **Cottages** are old houses that can be found in the country. Typical English cottages are black and white half-timbered with **thatched roof** made of straw.

Flats Advantages: cheaper, more comfortable

Disadvantages: no privacy, you must be quiet at night as neighbours may complain, it is difficult to keep pets

Houses Advantages: you can relax in the garden or swim in the pool (if there is one) whenever you want, you can hold barbecue parties, you can keep animals and grow fruits and vegetables

Disadvantages: there is always a lot of work to do around the house (like regular mowing the lawn), the maintenance and heating can be expensive

Advantages of living in a town/city: there are a lot of shopping, cultural, or sporting facilities, schools, hospitals, more jobs available, people do not have to commute to work, there are more things to do, more interesting events, and more people to meet

Advantages of living in a village: the environment is less polluted, there are no factories, the surroundings are quiet and there are usually woods, lakes, and meadows, you can keep domestic animals, you can do sports like cycling or running literally right behind your backyard

A typical British house is a terraced or a semi-detached house built of **red bricks** with no plaster on it. There is a small **front garden** with a **driveway** and a **back garden** with a **lawn** and perhaps some flowers. The house has two or three **storeys**. **Downstairs**, there is a kitchen with a view to the back garden, the **dining room** and the **living room** with a **fireplace**. Stairs are usually very narrow and carpeted the same as the rest of the house. **Upstairs**, there are **bedrooms** and a **study**. There are often two **bathrooms** in English houses. **Tubs** are more common than showers.

Describing a house

My family lives in a large family house with a large garden. The house itself has two floors, a **cellar**, an **attic**, and a **garage**.

On the ground floor, there is a **hall** and a large **kitchen**, a living room and stairs to the first floor. In the kitchen, which is on the left, you can see some blue **cupboards**, a **cooker**, a **sink**, a large round brown table with blue chairs and a yellow lamp above it. Opposite the kitchen there is a large living room with a **sofa**,

two **armchairs** and a **coffee table**. Next to, opposite the windows, there is a large **bookcase** with hundreds of books. Under the window there is a piano and next to it there is a shelf with a TV set. The room is **decorated** with pictures and flowerpots with various plants.

Upstairs on the right there is a parents' bedroom with one large bed and many **wardrobes**, two **bedside tables** with little lamps, an armchair and a small bookcase. Opposite there are two children bedrooms. Next to the stairs there is a toilet and a bathroom with a large **bathtub** and a **washbasin**.

I have my own room. There is a bed, a wardrobe, a large table with a chair, one very old and beautiful armchair and a small bookcase. There is a PC on my table. On the walls there are many posters. There is a cage with my tiny blue budgie on the bookcase.

Describing a flat

I live in a **four-room flat** in a **housing estate** not far from the town centre. It is a block of flats with four storeys. We live on the fourth floor.

The biggest room in our flat is the living room with a sofa, some **furniture** and a **balcony** where my mum grows a lot of plants. One of the living room corners is also used as a study where there is a desk with a computer on it. Next to the living room there is my parents' bedroom with a double bed and wardrobes. This room is quite small, the same size as mine and my sister's room. I used **to share my room** with my older brother but since he left it has been only mine. All rooms open into the kitchen which is rectangular in shape and not very **spacious**. There is just enough space for the **kitchen unit**, a small **dining table**, a **fridge** and a **pantry** which is rather a wardrobe for storing food. There is also a small bathroom with a bathtub, a washing basin and a toilet. There is a small **utility room** next to the **entrance hall**. We can also store some things down in the cellar. There we keep our bicycles, skis, my father's tools and potatoes and stewed fruit.

Questions:

- Can you describe your house or flat to me?
- How much housework do you do? Tell me about it.
- Have you ever moved furniture in your room? Why? / Why not?
- What is better: living in a house or living in a flat? Why?
- Would you like to live in a city or in a village? Why?
- Should your future house have a swimming pool? Why? / Why not?
- Do you live in a house or flat? Tell me about it.
- Which shops and other facilities are there in your neighbourhood? Tell me about them.
- Have you ever stayed at somebody's home overnight? Tell me about it. / Why not?
- Can you imagine moving because of school or work? Why? / Why not?
- Should young people start living on their own after the Maturita exam? Why? / Why not?
- If you lived in a house with a big garden, how would you use it? Tell me about it. / Why?
- Now, tell me about what you like or dislike about the place where you live.
- Which room do you like the most? Why?
- Would you like to live there in the future? Why? / Why not?
- Do you get on well with your neighbours? Tell me about it. / Why not?
- In what kind of house do you live? Tell me something about it.
- What do you miss most about your home when you travel? Why?
- Which of the household chores do you do? Tell me about some of them.
- Do you think that household chores should be done by all family members? Why? / Why not?
- What would your ideal house look like? Tell me about it.
- Which one thing from your house would you take with you if you could only take one? Why?