

## Housing and Home

Home is the place where we feel safe and relaxed. It is the place we look forward to when coming back from school, work or holidays. It doesn't matter whether we live in a house or a flat, in a city or in the countryside, we all need home. When we miss home a lot, we become homesick. Homesickness usually appears when we are away for a long time or when we are too far from the place we live in. We miss people, objects, food, language or culture. There are simply some places we cannot feel at home. When we lose our home, we become homeless. The growing number of homeless people is becoming a serious problem, especially in cities. Some people believe we should be helpful and compassionate, whereas others feel that the homeless do not seem to take much effort to change their pitiful situation, so we should not feel obliged to support them at all. Housing is expensive. It is extremely difficult, especially for young people, to buy their own flat or house. So they can either take a mortgage or choose to live with their parents as long as possible. Several generations sharing one flat or house is a frequent phenomenon in our country nowadays.

When considering the pros and cons of different types of dwellings, one finds out that it is very difficult to generalize. In the past houses used to be larger and more expensive to purchase and maintain than flats. That is not necessarily true today. There is a wide range of flats: from huge luxury flats to tiny one room studios. Whether you live in a house or a flat, it seems that the bigger dwelling you occupy, the more expensive it is and the more housework it requires.

Comparing living in a city with living in the countryside is also a tricky matter. Some people dream of moving to the country just for the peace and quiet, fresh air and beautiful scenery. However, living in a village is not always as idyllic as that. Job opportunities and medical and shopping facilities as well as transport and entertainment are some of the most popular reasons why so many people prefer towns and cities or at least living very close to them.

No matter where we live, it is up to each of us to make our homes cosy and comfortable. After all, east, west, home's the best!

**Answer the questions:**

1. What does home mean to you?

2. Explain the expression "an Englishman's home is his castle".

Do you think it's true for all people?

3. Housing is so expensive now, should governments intervene to keep prices down, or provide more social housing?