

Describing Houses and Buildings

Warm up

- What does your house or apartment look like? If you could change one thing about it, what would it be?
- When was the last time you moved? Was it stressful?
- What would your dream house be?
- Are there any buildings in your city that you think are particularly ugly or beautiful?
- Do you like skyscrapers? Or do you think they're ugly?
- What was the house or apartment you grew up in like? Try to describe it in detail.



1. You are going to listen to a conversation that contains the following vocabulary. Match the vocabulary to the pictures.

mould

tiles

ceiling

carpet

roof

curtains





2. Michael is moving out, and his real estate agent is inspecting his apartment to see if he can get his deposit back. Listen to the audio and answer the questions.

- a) Why is Janet in a rush?
- b) Why does Michael think he is not responsible for the stains on the carpet?
- c) What is Janet's email address?
- d) Why did Michael get new curtains?
- e) What are the two things wrong with the bathroom?
- f) Why does Janet think the oven and stove will need to be replaced?
- g) How did Michael get marks on his ceiling in the kitchen?
- h) Do you think Michael will get his deposit back?



3. Read the ads for apartments and match the underlined terms to their definitions on the next page.

Cozy 2 bedroom flat for rent on the lower east side, 80 square meters. Apartment comes fully furnished except for cutlery and dishes. Apartment has a beautiful balcony overlooking the city and comes with a personal basement. Carpet may need to be replaced. \$580 per month warm.

Perfect for young professionals!

Stylish, modern apartment on the 12th floor right in the heart of the city, perfect accommodation for young professionals. This apartment is 50 square meters, has beautiful wooden floorboards, elevator access, a dishwasher, and a gas stove. \$700 per month cold. No pets allowed.

Do you like to party??

Large, fun, slightly run-down share house looking for an easy-going, clean, sociable tenant. Single furnished room with ensuite bathroom. Communal kitchen and bathroom, 7 other housemates. Must be ok with parties. \$250 per month.



Which of these would suit you best, and why?

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|------------------|---|
| a) accommodation | 1. Something that is shared. |
| b) share house | 2. Comes with furniture. |
| c) tenant | 3. Electricity, water, and heating are included in the price. |
| d) warm | 4. A place to live or stay. |
| e) basement | 5. A warm and comfortable place. |
| f) furnished | 6. People that live together |
| g) dishwasher | 7. A person who rents the place they live. |
| h) housemates | 8. A machine for cleaning dishes and cutlery |
| i) communal | 9. A room under a house or building, below ground. |
| j) cozy | 10. A house that a group of people rent together. |



4. Ask and answer the following questions with a partner.

- Would describe your house or apartment as cozy? Why or why not?
- Do you have a dishwasher?
- Did your house come fully furnished, or did you furnish it yourself?
- Have you ever had a housemate? What were they like?
- If you work in an office, do you think your office has nice communal spaces? Can you describe them?
- What type of accommodation do you prefer when you go on holiday?





5. Write an ad for a house or apartment for rent. It could be your own house, a house you used to live in, or an imaginary house. Try to go into as much detail as possible.

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6. Pairwork: Good news! You have won a million dollars to design your dream house... bad news, you have to design it with your partner. Read through the options below and decide which you would like to take and why. Feel free to suggest other options.

Location

Either a large apartment in the middle of a city of your choice...

Or a large house in the middle of nowhere on the edge of a cliff with a beautiful view of the ocean.

Style

Either clean, modern, and minimalist. No clutter, cutting edge home appliances, lots of neutral colours...

Or cozy and a little bit quirky. Lots of interesting decorations, lots of vintage furniture, and lots of warm colours.

Outdoors

Either a cute vegetable and herb garden which requires a lot of maintenance...

Or a tiled swimming pool with a fence around it and a sauna.

Flooring

Either nice thick white carpet in most rooms, but tiles in the kitchen and bathroom...

Or polished wooden floorboards in most rooms, but tiles in the bathroom.





7. After a few days Michael calls Janet to discuss his deposit. Listen to [the conversation](#) and answer the questions.

- a) How much of his deposit did Michael lose?
- b) According to Janet, why is mould removal so expensive?
- c) Why can't Michael prove that his dishwasher was clean?
- d) Why did the real estate have to repaint the whole ceiling?
- e) Who is Mr Jones going to contact?
- f) Who do you agree with in this situation?



8. You are going to play a game where you must describe a word to your class (without using the word). Your teacher will give you the words. The first person to guess the word wins a point, and the person describing the word gets a point if someone guesses the word within 20 seconds.