

Living in English: *Housing*





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Vocabulary: Housing

Types of Accommodation

apartment building

- a high-rise – an apartment building with at least ten floors
- a walkup – an apartment building with no elevator, usually four floors or less

house

- a bungalow or rancher – a house with only one floor above ground (may or may not have a basement level)
- a two-story house – a house with two floors above ground (may or may not have a basement level)
- a three-story house – a house with three floors above ground

townhouse – a unit with a separate entrance door, but a part of a larger group of homes that are joined together, each sharing a common wall with the one beside it.

duplex – a house that is divided into two living accommodations, either side-by-side or one above the other, with two separate entrances

condominium (condo) – an apartment or townhouse that is owned rather than rented; the owner usually pays a monthly fee to cover the costs of building and property maintenance

mobile home or trailer – a home on wheels

suite – another term for an apartment

flat – a British term for an apartment

a bachelor apartment – an apartment for one person, no separate bedroom

Other Vocabulary

landlord/landlady – owner of a building

tenant – renter or occupant of a house or apartment

lease – the contract a tenant signs when renting an apartment or house

mortgage – a loan given when one buys a house or property

suburbs – residential districts, away from the downtown area of a city

security deposit (damage deposit) – the money a tenant pays a landlord before moving in; often it is half a month's rent; the landlord keeps this money until the tenant moves out; if the apartment is not damaged, the money is returned.

appliances – fridge, stove, washer, dryer, dishwasher

utilities – gas, electricity, water



Practice Making Questions

Directions: There are many things you may want to know when you are going to rent an apartment. Make questions about the words in italics.

Ex. *rent* – *How much is the rent? What is the rent?*

1. location _____

2. number of bedrooms _____

3. close to schools / major bus route / shopping, etc. _____

4. appliances - _____

5. utilities - _____

6. pets - _____

7. parking - _____

8. security deposit - _____

9. lease - _____

10. when / available - _____

11. air-conditioned / carpeted - _____

12. balcony / cable T.V. _____

13. laundry facilities - _____

14. which floor - _____

15. elevator - _____

other - _____



Group Work – Where Do You Live?

Directions: Interview your classmates. Find out about the places where they live. If your partner lives in an apartment, fill out chart A. If your classmate lives in a house, fill out chart B. Do the same for yourself.

Chart A - Apartment

Name:	You	Classmate #1	Classmate #2
Location			
Number of floors			
Which Floor			
Elevator			
Laundry room / where			
Balcony			
Parking			

Chart B - House

Name:	You	Classmate #1	Classmate #2
Location			
How many floors			
Big back yard			
Garage			
Porch			
Basement			
Fence			
How many rooms			



Abbreviations In Housing Ads

Most newspapers use abbreviations in their advertisements. Abbreviations may not always be the same in all regions of the country. Some abbreviations are formed from the first few letters of the word: **ex. *balc.* (balcony)**. Others are formed by using the first initials of compound words: **ex. *b.r.* (bedroom)**. Still others may be formed by using the consonants, without the vowels of a word: **ex. *dntn.* (downtown)**. The abbreviations given below may not be the only ones used.

1. adult - adlt.
2. after - aft.
3. air-conditioning - a/c
4. appliances - appl.
5. apartment - apt.
6. bachelor - bach.
7. balcony - balc.
8. basement - base. or bsmt.
9. bathroom - bath. or ba.
10. bedroom - b.r. or bdrm.
11. building - bldg.
12. close - cl.
13. convenient - conv.
14. dining room - D.R.
15. downtown - dntn.
16. drapes - drps.
17. elevator - elev.
18. floor - fl. or flr.
19. furnished - furn.
20. garage - gar.
21. house - hse.
22. immediate - imm.or immed.
23. includes - incl.
24. inquire - inq.
25. kitchen - kit. or kitch
26. large - lg.
27. laundry - laun.
28. living room - l.r. or liv. rm.
29. manager - mgr.
30. modern - mod.
31. near - nr.
32. newly decorated - new. dec.
33. parking - pkg. or pkg.
34. possession - poss.
35. refrigerator - refrig.
36. security deposit - sec. dep.
37. separate - sep.
38. side by side - SxS
39. small - sm.
40. spacious - spac.
41. stove - stv.
42. sublet - sub.
43. suite - ste.
44. transportation - trans.
45. unfurnished - unfurn.
46. utilities - util.
47. wall to wall carpeting - w/w carp.
48. washer/dryer - w/d
49. week - wk.



Reading – Rental Accommodation Advertisements

Directions: Read the Classified Ads below and then answer the questions on the following page.

Classified Ads

1.

Room for Rent (Furnished)

260 Young St., cl. to Main St. nice furn. clean room, avail. for Dec.1. Rooms incl. fridge, & cable. Share kit., bath laund., clean & quiet tenants only. \$300 mo.
Ph. 453-9860

2

Room & Board

Room & board avail., downtown lcn., cl. to all conv. 3 meals, 7 days, T.V., ph. 452-3412

3

Apartment For Rent

Unfurnished large 2 b.r. ste., nr. dntn., balc., cable T.V., a/c, pkg., immed., poss., ph. 787-3426

4

Townhouse For Rent

immed. poss., spac., 3 b.r., one level twnhse., 2 baths, prkg. incl., \$950. ph. 772-9087

5

Duplex For Rent

3 b.r. upper duplex, 4 appls., 1 _ baths, cl to shop., bus & schools, \$900, pkg. & all util. inc., avail. Sept. 15., ph. 663-7869

6

House For Rent

nr. shop. mall & parks, 3 b.r., 4 appls., \$800/mo. plus util. w/w carp., avail.immed., No pets, ph. 895-0954

7

Shared Accommodation

M/F Roommate wtd to share 2 b.r. house, \$400/mo. Incl. Util. & prkg. , no smk., ph. 489-6059



Classified Ads – Comprehension Exercise

Directions: Read the Classified Ads on the previous page and answer the questions below.

Ad. #1. Does the room for rent have a private bath? _____
Are there laundry facilities? _____
When can you move in? _____

Ad. #2. Is this accommodation close to a bus stop? _____
Is lunch included in the board? _____

Ad. #3. Where is the apartment located? _____
Is it on the main floor? _____
How do you know this? _____
When is it available? _____

Ad. #4. Do you have to pay extra for parking? _____

Ad. #5. Is this a side-by-side duplex? _____
Is heating extra? _____
What does 1 _ baths mean? _____

Ad. #6. Is electricity included in the rent? _____
Which appliances do you think are included? _____

Ad. #7. What is not allowed in this accommodation? _____

Situation: Mr. And Mrs. Roberts are renting a small two-story house right now. They have two children and a large dog. Soon Mrs. Roberts' mother is coming to live with them and they will have to find a new place to live. She is very old and has difficulty walking. Mr. and Mrs. Roberts own a car.

Which ad do you think they should answer? Why?



Reading #2 – What to Look for When Renting a House or Apartment

There are many things to consider before renting a house or an apartment. First you must decide how much rent you can afford to pay. You also have to consider how much space you will need and what type of accommodation you want. Another important consideration is location. Is convenience important? Do you want to be close to shopping, schools, buses, playgrounds, etc.?

When you are looking at places to rent, you should check both the interior and exterior carefully. When examining the outside of the building, it is a good idea to look for cracks and holes in the outside walls because they could let cold air in. Check the doors carefully. They should fit tightly and have locks with keys. Windows should also fit well. Any broken windows should be repaired by the landlord before you move in.

Look through each room carefully. Check all electrical switches and outlets to see if they work. Look for holes or cracks in walls. A bathroom should have a fan, window or vent. You should flush the toilet to see if it works. If the water runs for a long time, it can increase your water bill. Also check to make sure the water faucets work. Look in the bedrooms and check for closet space. If appliances such as fridge and stove or washer and dryer are included, ensure they are working properly. Don't forget to look for a fire alarm or smoke detector. All homes should have one.

Whether renting a house or an apartment, you should know the kind of heating system and the heating costs. If it is a house, inspect the furnace. In some rental accommodations, the utilities are included in the rent. In others, they are not. This is the same for parking. Make sure to find out what is included before you agree to take a place. Some landlords require you to sign a lease, which is a rental agreement. The lease tells how much the rent is, the date on which the rent must be paid, the amount of damage deposit, and the length of time of the rental. Always read a lease carefully before you sign it.

Vocabulary Review – Match the words on the left with the correct meaning on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| _____ 1. afford | a. place to live |
| _____ 2. interior | b. outside |
| _____ 3. landlord | c. written rental agreement |
| _____ 4. vent | d. heat, water, electricity |
| _____ 5. faucet | e. a heater for buildings |
| _____ 6. appliances | f. ease |
| _____ 7. utilities | g. have enough money |
| _____ 8. lease | h. owner of building |
| _____ 9. convenience | i. water tap |
| _____ 10. furnace | j. inside |
| _____ 11. accommodation | k. fridge, stove, washer, dryer |
| _____ 12. exterior | l. a hole to allow air in and out |



Vocabulary Review

Choose the correct word from the list below and complete the sentences.

landlord – tenant – lease – deposit – sublet – appliances – utilities – balcony
bachelor – convenient – spacious – available – board – duplex

1. That apartment building has no vacancies right now, but there may be a suite _____ next month.
2. I had to sign a one year _____ for my apartment.
3. His apartment is in a very _____ location. It is close to many stores, restaurants and bus stops.
4. When you rent a house, you often have to pay extra for all the _____, but when you rent an apartment, the heating costs are usually included.
5. The _____ is the occupant and the person who pays the rent.
6. The _____ is the owner of the building.
7. Dan lives alone, so he only needs a _____ apartment.
8. The fridge, stove, washer, and dryer are called the _____.
9. Mr. and Mrs. Jones have five children and a dog, so they want to find a very _____ house.
10. When you rent an apartment, you usually have to pay half a month's rent as a damage _____. If the apartment is in good condition when you move out, this money will be returned to you.
11. I have a one year lease, but I want to leave before my lease expires. I will have to _____.
12. A house that is divided into two, with two separate entrances is called a _____.
13. She keeps a lot of pretty plants and flowers on her _____ in the summer.
14. Many students _____ in other people's homes when they go away to university. It is cheaper than renting an apartment.



Find Someone Who...

Find someone:

1. who lives in a rented house.

2. who has a balcony.

3. who didn't have to pay a security deposit.

4. who has an air-conditioned apartment.

5. who doesn't have a lease.

6. whose apartment doesn't have an elevator.

7. who lives in a highrise.

8. whose apartment allows pets.

9. who is thinking of moving.

10. who owns his/her own appliances.

11. who had more spacious accommodation in his/her own country.



Teacher's Notes (page 1 of 3)

These activities are designed for low-intermediate level adult ESL learners; however, with some modification, they may also be suitable for upper-beginner through upper-intermediate levels.

Recommended Flashcards To Accompany This Unit

Housing

Introduction

On the day prior to introducing the theme of Housing, ask the students to bring any pictures they may have of their homes or friends' homes, both interior and exterior pictures. Bring pictures of your own showing as many different types of living accommodations as possible. Also bring the classified section of several newspapers.

Vocabulary Development

Before distributing the vocabulary sheet on housing, try to elicit as much vocabulary as possible from the students about different kinds of living accommodation and put the words on the board.

Introduce your pictures and the vocabulary. Repeat and monitor pronunciation. Give examples in sentences and ask the students to give their own examples.

Practice Making Questions – Asking about Apartment Rentals

Work with the class to make questions for the words that are provided on the worksheet. Try to elicit the questions from the students. There may be several different questions for each word.

ex. parking – Is parking included in the rent? How much is parking? Is there underground parking?

ex. appliances – Are the appliances included? Which appliances are included? Are the appliances new? – etc.)

Try to encourage the students to think of more questions they would like to ask about housing. Put the questions on the board and practice repeating them.

Group Work – Conversation Practice - Where Do You Live?

Break the class into groups of three. Have the students complete the charts provided by asking each other about their living accommodations. Have the students share their pictures in their groups, encouraging real conversation, while they complete their charts. Ensure they understand all the vocabulary before they start. There are a few words on this sheet (ex. porch, basement, fence) that were not used in the previous activity.



Teacher's Notes (page 2 of 3)

Abbreviations in Housing Ads

Try to brainstorm with the class the different types of categories of rental accommodation. ex. furnished apartments, unfurnished apartments, room & board, shared accommodation, townhouses, furnished houses, unfurnished houses, duplexes). Put a list on the board. Bring several newspapers to class and break the students into groups. Have them choose three or four ads and write down all the abbreviations they find. Put them on the board and have the students try to tell you what the abbreviations mean. Point out that abbreviations are not always formed in the same way and that there might be several different ways to abbreviate the same word. Distribute the list of abbreviations and read together, monitoring for pronunciation and ensuring comprehension.

Reading - Classified Ads and Comprehension Exercise

Have the students work individually on the worksheet while you circulate and monitor their work. Correct orally with the class as a whole. Have students alternate giving the answers. Have students alternate reading the ads aloud.

Reading #2 – What to Look for When Renting a House or Apartment

Pre-reading - Ask the class to think of things they should consider before renting a place and what types of things to check for when looking at places to rent. Put the lists on the board. Have students take turns reading the passage aloud and monitor pronunciation. Check for comprehension, by asking questions. (ex. What should you consider before renting? Why should you check the exterior walls? What should you take note of when looking at the doors? etc.) Have the students read the passage again silently and complete the vocabulary exercise on their own. Correct together.

1.g 2.j 3. h 4.m 5.i 6. k 7.d. 8.c 9.f 10.e 11.a 12.b

Vocabulary Review

Have the students work individually on the worksheet while you circulate and monitor their work. Correct orally with the class as a whole.

- | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. available | 2. lease | 3. convenient | 4. utilities | 5. tenant |
| 6. landlord | 7. bachelor | 8. appliances | 9. spacious | 10. deposit |
| 11. sub-let | 12. duplex | 13. balcony | 14. board | |



Teacher's Notes (page 3 of 3)

Group Interaction and Question Formation – “Find Someone Who..”

Distribute the worksheet. Have the students write the questions before they begin the oral practice and review the questions together. This will ensure they are asking the questions correctly as they circulate around the room. Have the students circulate around the class asking the questions on the sheet. When the student finds a classmate who can answer the question, he will then write the student's name on the line and follow-up with one more question of his/her own. Ex. “Do you have a balcony?”- If the student answers “yes”, the second question might be: “What floor do you live on?” or “Can you barbecue on your balcony?” Try to encourage the students to engage in real conversation during this activity. Follow up by sharing the information with the whole class. This activity provides a good opportunity for the students to practice the new vocabulary.