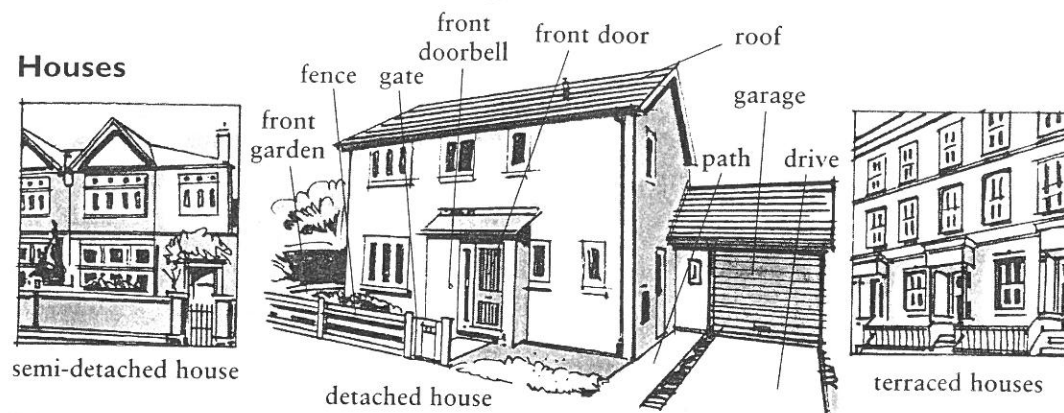
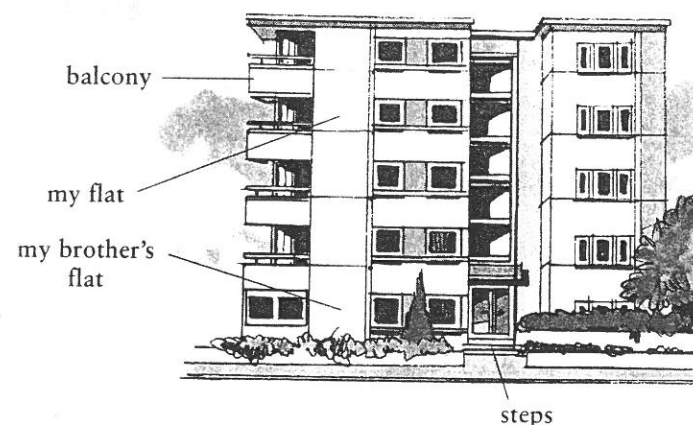


49 Homes and buildings

A Houses



B Flats



I live in a block of flats.
My brother lives on the ground floor,
and I have a flat on the third floor.
Unfortunately there is no lift, so I
have to climb three flights of stairs to
reach my flat. But I do have a balcony
with a wonderful view of the park
opposite the flats.

Note: Steps are usually outside a building or inside a public building; they are stone or wooden. Stairs (*pl*) connect floors inside a building and are often covered with a carpet.

C Buying and renting

Some people buy a flat or house (= they own it / it belongs to them). When they do this in Britain, people usually borrow money from a bank or an organisation called a Building Society. This money, which is called a **mortgage**, is often paid back over 25 years. Other people rent a house or flat (= they pay money every week or month to the person who owns the house). When they do this, the money they pay is called the **rent**, and the person who owns the house or flat is the **landlord**.

D Describing a flat or house

The rooms on the ground floor are quite **dark** (\neq light) because they don't get (= receive) very much sun. They are also quite **noisy** (\neq quiet) because they are near the roads and the traffic. The other negative thing is that the rooms are **draughty** (= cold air comes into the room through the windows and under the doors because they don't fit very well). This means it is expensive to **heat** the rooms (= to keep the rooms warm). Fortunately I have a very good central **heating** system. In other ways, it is also very nice: it's in **good condition** (= in a good state/doesn't need to be repaired; \neq in bad condition), and the rooms are **huge/enormous** (= very, very big; \neq tiny / very, very small)

Exercises

49.1 What can you remember about the house and block of flats on the opposite page? Without looking, try to answer these questions. If you think an answer is false, correct it. Finally, check your answers by looking at the opposite page.

- 1 Does the house have a garage?
- 2 Does it have a fence around the front garden?
- 3 Is there a window in the roof?
- 4 Is the gate open or shut?
- 5 How many steps are there in front of the entrance to the block of flats?
- 6 Does each flat have a balcony?
- 7 Does the brother live on the first floor?
- 8 Do the flats have a view of the countryside?

49.2 Complete these sentences with a suitable noun or verb.

- 1 I opened the, walked up the and rang the
- 2 We had to six flights of stairs to get to her flat because the wasn't working.
- 3 I've got a great from my balcony.
- 4 Do you own the flat or do you it?
- 5 I'm living in the house now but it actually to my brother. He bought it two years ago. It was in very bad then, but he spent a lot of money on it.
- 6 It costs a lot of money to a house when you live in a cold climate. Central is usually quite expensive.

49.3 Write down four more positive things and four more negative things you could say about a house/flat or the rooms in a house/flat. When you have finished, compare your answers with section D opposite.

Positive	Negative
the rooms are very light	the rooms are very dark
.....
.....
.....

Now think about your answers again. Which positive features are the most important for you? Which negative features do you hate the most?

49.4 What about your home? Answer these questions.

- 1 Do you live in a house or flat?
- 2 If you live in a flat, what floor is it on?
- 3 If you live in a house, do you have a garden?
- 4 Does the house/flat belong to you (or your family), or do you rent it?
- 5 Do you have your own garage or personal parking space?
- 6 Would you describe your house/flat as dark or light?
- 7 Is it noisy or quiet?
- 8 Do you have central heating?