

A

Relatives*

RELATIVES



My father died when I was nine, and so my mother was a **widow**¹ with four young children. She **remarried** five years later, so now I have a **stepfather**. As he is not my real father, I call him by his first name, which is Dieter. I've got an **elder**² brother called Thomas and two younger sisters, Anya and Claudia, who are **twins**³. We're a **close family**⁴.

My mother is an **only child**⁵, but I've got two uncles on my father's side. One is married with two children, and the other is married with three children, so **altogether** I have five **cousins**. I **get on well with**⁶ Uncle Rolf, and he always tells me I'm his favourite **nephew**. Of his **nieces**, I think he likes Anya best.

Recently my brother Thomas **got married**. His wife's name is Sabine, so I now have a **sister-in-law**⁷ as well.

* members of your family; *syn* **relations**

¹ a woman whose husband has died

² older

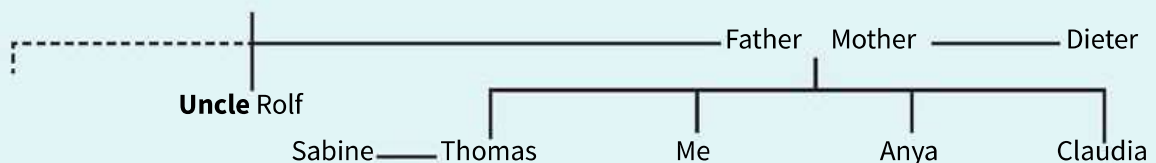
³ two children born to one mother at the same time

⁴ a family who like each other and stay together a lot

⁵ without brothers or sisters

⁶ have a good relationship with

⁷ (also **mother/brother/son-in-law**, etc.)



Common mistakes

It's more common and more natural to say '**Thomas's** wife' (NOT ~~the wife of Thomas~~) or '**Anna's** younger sister' (NOT ~~the younger sister of Anna~~).

B

Friends

FRIENDS

My **best friend** is Florian, an **old school friend**¹. We **got to know each other**² when we were in the same class at school. We've been **mates**³ **ever since**⁴, and our **friendship** is very important to both of us. He spends a lot of time with my family, and his **current**⁵ girlfriend is actually one of Thomas's **ex-girlfriends**. But we all get on really well.

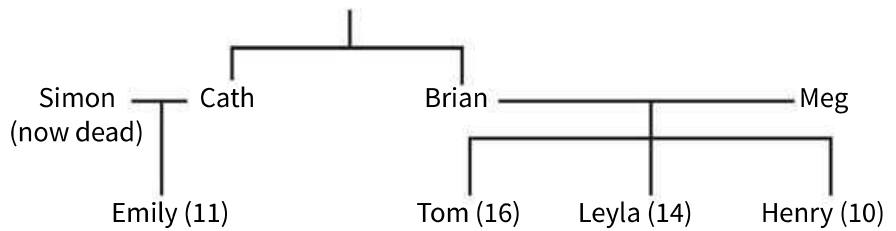


Language help

We use the prefix **ex-** for a relationship we had in the past but do not have now, e.g. *The children stay with my **ex-** husband at the weekend; I saw an **ex-** girlfriend of mine yesterday.*

Exercises

13.1 Look at the family tree, then complete the sentences below.



- 1 Simon died two years ago, so Cath is a *widow*
- 2 Leyla is Cath's
- 3 Tom is Cath's
- 4 Cath is Meg's
- 5 Simon was Brian's
- 6 Tom is Leyla's brother.
- 7 Emily is Leyla's
- 8 Emily is an child.

13.2 Which words are being defined?

- 1 Your *current* boyfriend is the one that you have now.
- 2 means get married again.
- 3 are all the members of your family.
- 4 Your friend is the one you like more than any other.
- 5 An friend is someone you have known for a long time.
- 6 are two children born to one mother at the same time.
- 7 is an informal word for a friend.
- 8 is the noun when two people are friends.
- 9 Your is the man who is married to your mother but is not your father.

13.3 Complete the text.

“I was still going out with James when I met my husband, Ben. We ¹ *got to know* each other because we went to the same gym twice a week. We went out with each other for about 18 months, and we got ² three years ago, so ³ we've been a couple for almost five years. We've continued to go to the gym ever ⁴ we got married, and I still quite often see James when we're there. It's nice if you can still ⁵ with an ⁶-boyfriend or -girlfriend.”

13.4

Over to you

Answer the questions for you, then, if possible, ask a friend and write their answers.

- 1 Are you an only child? If not, do you have elder brothers or sisters?
- 2 Do you get on well with other members of your family?
- 3 Are you a close family?
- 4 Who was the last person in your family to get married? When?
- 5 Who's your best friend?
- 6 How long have you known him/her?
- 7 How did you get to know each other?

A Ages and stages in the UK



Age	Stage
0	birth [the moment a baby is born]
Up to 12 months	a baby
12 months – 3 years old	a toddler
3–12 years old	a child: this period is your childhood
13–18 approximately	a teenager : during this period you are in your teens
18+	an adult
40+ approximately	people are middle-aged [in the middle of their lives]
60 or 65	retirement [when people stop work; they are retired]
80+	old age (we usually describe people as elderly)

B Approximate ages

I'm **in my early twenties** [21–23].

My parents are **in their mid-fifties** [54–56].

My grandmother is **in her late seventies** [77–79].

My grandfather is **nearly/almost eighty** [he's probably 79].

My English teacher's **approximately/roughly** thirty.

[about 30 / more or less 30]

Common mistakes

We can say, **he's 30 or he's 30 years old**. (NOT he has 30 or he's 30 years)

Also: a **30-year-old man**
(NOT a 30-years-old man)

C Past and present

PAST AND PRESENT

My grandmother's name was Mary. She's **dead**¹ now. She died about ten years ago when I was in my teens, but I remember her well. She was **brought up**² on a farm in Wales, and her parents were very **strict**: as a teenager, they didn't **allow**³ her to listen to the radio or go to parties in the village. **In the end**⁴, she decided to leave home and get a job in Cardiff. **At first**⁵ it wasn't easy, but she **managed**⁶ to find work, and she also met the man who became her husband: my grandfather. My mother was born four years later. She had a very different childhood. She grew up in the city, she **was allowed to** go to parties, and when she was in her teens, her parents **let**⁷ her **stay out late**⁸. My mum is the same with me.



¹ not living; *opp* **alive**

² looked after until you are an adult

³ give permission

⁴ finally, after a lot of time or thought

⁵ at the beginning

⁶ was able (but it was difficult)

⁷ allowed

⁸ not go home until late

Language help

Let and **allow** have the same meaning. **Let** is slightly more informal, and **allow** is often used in the passive.

My dad **let me drive** his car. I **was allowed to drive** my dad's car.

You're not allowed to smoke in that room. (NOT ~~It's not allowed to~~ smoke in that room.)

Exercises

14.1 Complete the sentences.

- 1 Isabella is only six months old – she’s still a baby
- 2 Louis was 22 a few months ago, so he’s in his
- 3 Amelia is 35, so she’s in her
- 4 Abigail will be 13 this year, so she’ll soon be a
- 5 William is 53 and his wife is 47, so they’re both
- 6 Joan is 80 this year, so she is quite
- 7 Michael was a bus driver for 40 years but he’s now
- 8 Leon is 18 this year, so legally he becomes
- 9 The boys are 14 and 16, so they’re both in their
- 10 Holly is just over a year old and she’s starting to walk, so she’s a now.

14.2 Are the sentences true or false about Mary’s life on the opposite page? If a sentence is false, change it to make it true.

- 1 Mary was brought up in the city. False. Mary was brought up on a farm.
- 2 She grew up in Wales.
- 3 Her parents let her do what she wanted.
- 4 She wasn’t allowed to listen to the radio.
- 5 Life was easy when she went to Cardiff.
- 6 She couldn’t get a job in Cardiff.

14.3 Rewrite the sentences without using the underlined words and phrases. Keep a similar meaning.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 My parents <u>are dead</u> now. | My parents <u>aren’t alive now</u> |
| 2 It was hard but <u>finally</u> I did it. | It was hard but |
| 3 She’s <u>approximately</u> my age. | She’s |
| 4 They’re <u>almost</u> thirty now. | They’re |
| 5 <u>I had to do what</u> my parents <u>wanted</u> . | My parents were |
| 6 My parents <u>let me</u> stay up and watch TV. | I was |
| 7 My mum <u>looked after me</u> in Scotland. | I was |
| 8 <u>I was able</u> to pass my exams <u>but it wasn’t easy</u> . | I |
| 9 <u>I didn’t go home until</u> late. | I |
| 10 <u>I was allowed</u> to wear what I liked. | My parents |
| 11 I was happy <u>as a child</u> . | I had a happy |
| 12 My grandparents <u>don’t work any more</u> . | My grandparents are |

14.4

Over to you

Answer the questions. If possible, ask a friend and write their answers.

- 1 Where were you brought up?
- 2 What do you particularly remember about your childhood?
- 3 Were your parents strict? What weren’t you allowed to do when you were a child?
- 4 How late were you allowed to stay out when you were a teenager?