

A

Relatives (= members of your family)

NOTE

In English we usually say 'my uncle's daughter' (NOT the daughter of my uncle) or 'Anna's sister' (NOT the sister of Anna).

	male	female
Your parents' parents	grandfather(s)	grandmother(s)
Your parents' brother and sister	uncle(s)	aunt(s)
Your aunt's/uncle's children	cousin(s)	cousin(s)
The father and mother of the person you marry	father-in-law	mother-in-law
The brother and sister of the person you marry	brother-in-law	sister-in-law
Your brother's/sister's children	nephew(s)	niece(s)
If the person you marry dies, you are a ...	widower	widow
If your mother or father remarries, you have a ...	stepfather	stepmother

B

Talking about family and friends

I've got two brothers and a sister. My brothers are **twins** (= two children born to one mother at the same time), and they are three years younger than me. I'm the oldest and I **take after** my father (= I am similar to him in appearance and/or character). My sister **takes after** my father in some ways, but she **looks like** my mother (= her appearance is similar to my mother's). We're a **close family** (= we have a good relationship/see each other a lot). My **best friend** Pete is an **only child** (= without brothers or sisters); he spends a lot of time with us and he's almost one of the family.

C

Family names

Your parents give you a **first name**, e.g. James and Sarah are common first names in Britain. Your **family name**, usually called your **surname**, is the one that all the family have, e.g. Smith and Jones. Your **full name** is all the names you have, e.g. Sarah Jane Smith.

D

Changing times

In some parts of the world, couples may live together but do not get married. In this relationship they often call each other their **partner**. Where the child or children live(s) with just one parent, especially after the parents have **separated** (= they don't live together any more), these are sometimes called **single-parent families**.

E

Friends

- an **old friend** (= someone you have known for a long time)
- a **close friend** (= a good friend/someone you like and trust)
- your **best friend** (= the one friend you feel closest to)
- classmates** (= other people in your class)
- flatmates** (= people you share a house/flat with, who are not your family)
- colleagues** (= people you work with; they may or may not be friends)

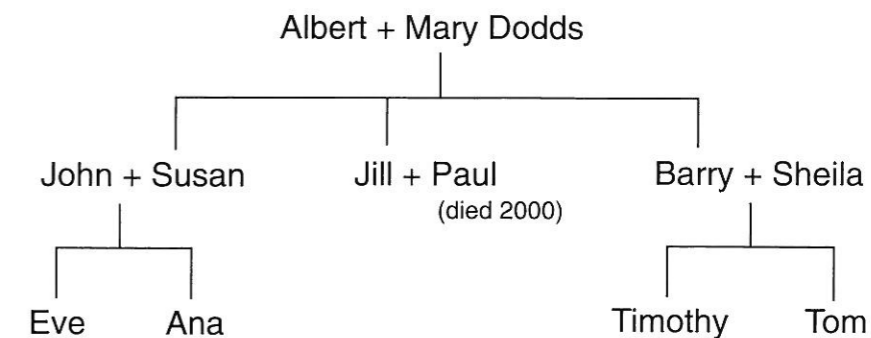
F

Ex-

We use this for a relationship that we had in the past but do not have now:  
 The children stay with my **ex-husband** at the weekend.  
 I saw an **ex-girlfriend** of mine at the disco last night.

Exercises

51.1 Look at the family tree and complete the sentences below.



- 1 John is Jill's .....
- 2 Timothy is Jill's .....
- 3 Eve and Ana are Timothy's .....
- 4 Eve is Sheila's .....
- 5 Albert Dodds is Tom's .....
- 6 Barry is Eve's .....
- 7 Susan is Timothy's .....
- 8 As Paul died in 2000, Jill is a .....
- 9 Tom is Mary's .....
- 10 The only two people who are not related are ..... and .....

51.2 Fill the gaps with the correct word.

- 1 Did you say his ..... name was Boris?
- 2 He looks like his mother but definitely takes ..... his father in character.
- 3 There is an increasing number of single-..... families in Britain.
- 4 Most of my ..... at work are married, and I don't see them socially.
- 5 I've known him for years; he's an ..... friend.
- 6 They're not married any longer, but she still sees her .....-husband.

51.3 Answer these questions about yourself.

- 1 What's your first name?
- 2 What's your surname?
- 3 Are you an only child?
- 4 Are you part of a very close family?
- 5 Do you look like your father or mother?
- 6 In character, who do you take after?
- 7 Do you know any twins?
- 8 Who is your best friend?
- 9 Do you work? If so, how many of your work colleagues are also your friends?
- 10 Do you have any ex-boyfriends or girlfriends who are still close friends?

51.4 Draw your own family tree. Are there any relationships you cannot describe in English?