

46 Family and friends

A Relatives (= members of your family)

These are the most important relatives (also called **relations**):

	<i>male</i>	<i>female</i>
Your parents' parents	grandfather	grandmother
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)
The person you marry dies, so you are a ...	widower	widow
Your mother or father remarries, so you have a ...	step-father	step-mother

B Family background (= family history)

My grandfather was a market gardener in Ireland. He grew flowers, fruit and vegetables, and sold them in the market every day. He worked hard all his life, and when he died, his son (now my uncle) and daughter (my mother) **inherited** a large house and garden (= received this house and garden from my grandfather when he died). They carried on the business together until my mother met my father. They got married, moved to England, and I was born two years later. They didn't have any more children, so I am an **only child**.

C Family names

When you are born, your family gives you a **first name**, e.g. James, Kate, Sarah and Alex are common first names in Britain. Your **family name** (also called your **surname**) is the one that all the family share e.g. Smith, Brown, Jones, and O'Neill are common surnames in Britain. Some parents give their children a **middle name** (like a first name), but you do not usually say this name. Your **full name** is all the names you have, e.g. Sarah Jane Smith.

D Changing times

Society changes and so do families. In some places, people may decide to live together but do not get married. They are not husband and wife, but call each other their **partner**. There are also many families in some parts of the world where the child or children live(s) with just their mother or father; these are sometimes called **single-parent families**.

E Friends

We can use a number of adjectives before **friend**:

- 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)

We use the word **colleagues** to describe the people we work with.

F Ex-

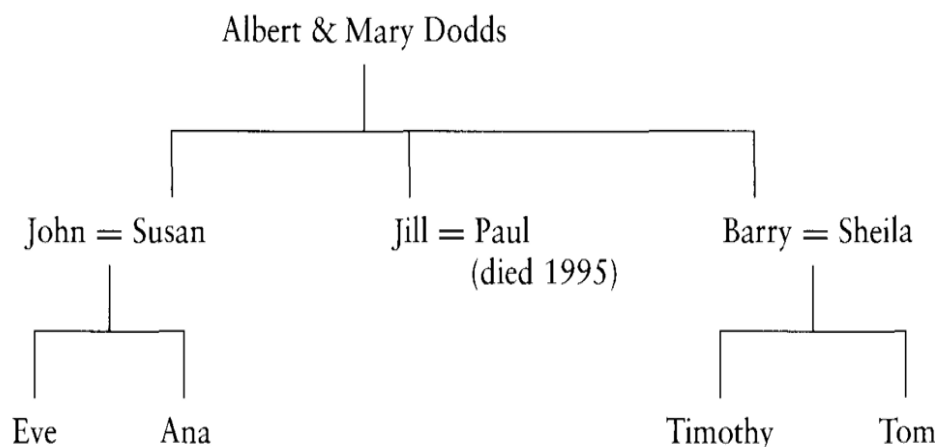
We use this for a husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend we had in the past but do not have now:

The children stay with my **ex-husband** at the weekend.

I saw an **ex-girlfriend** of mine at the disco last night.

Exercises

46.1 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 1995, Jill is a
- 9 Tom is Mary's
- 10 The only two people who are not related are and

46.2 Answer these questions about yourself and your country.

- 1 What's your first name?
- 2 What's your surname?
- 3 Is that a common name in your country?
- 4 Do you have a middle name?
- 5 Are you an only child?
- 6 Who is your oldest friend?
- 7 Do you work? If so, how many of your work colleagues are also your friends?
- 8 Do you have any ex-boyfriends or ex-girlfriends who speak English very well?
- 9 Are single-parent families becoming more common in your country?
- 10 In your country, do more and more people live together without getting married?

46.3 Draw your own family tree. Are there any relationships you cannot describe in English? Can you also write a short summary of your family background (as in B on the opposite page)?