Where do you live? And what do you live in? Basically, you either live in a house or an apartment. An apartment is a home in a large building with many other homes. We call these apartment buildings. There’s also a difference between America and Europe when it comes to saying which floor you are on. In the US, the floor you enter from the outside is the first floor and then you go up to the second, etc. In many parts of Europe, it’s called the ground floor and then you go up to the first floor. Sometimes I still have to think about which floor I live on!

In the US, apartments are always rented, you don’t own them like you can own a house. You do, however, own a condominium. It is a part of an apartment building or other complex in which each person owns their own home and pays a fee to take care of the property. Other types of joined housing are townhouses and duplexes. A townhouse is a string of houses attached together, but with individual entrances to each home. A duplex is just two homes side-by-side.

Houses come in all shapes, sizes and colors and they can have a garden. In the US, a garden is a place to grow plants and vegetables whereas the grassy area around a house is called a yard. Most houses in the US have a front yard and a back yard.

If your house has two floors, we call it a two-storey house. The space under the roof of the house (usually for storing old clothes and stuff) is the attic. The underground part of the house (also for storing stuff!) is called the basement. Not all houses have these areas.

We have cottages in America, too. If you have a really nice one, it can be called a cabin. A really run-down one that needs a lot of work is called a shack. These are usually vacation or weekend homes and most people like them to be on a lake.

We have block of flats (BrE) - apartment building (AmE) ground floor (BrE) - first floor (AmE) semi-detached house (BrE) - duplex (AmE) Other types of US houses

Bungalow – a single floor family home. In the US, this term is used mostly in the North, Midwest and West, and almost not at all in the South.

Ranch house – a single floor family home with a low roof and attached garage is extremely popular in the South and West of the US.

Trailer – also known as a mobile home, these are factory-made homes that are transported to the buyer’s site. Quite often they are grouped together in a community called a trailer park. They are an inexpensive alternative to buying a home or renting an apartment.

Before you talk to anyone in Britain about housing, you need to know a few phrases. The first is that most young people who are working want to ‘get their foot on the bottom of the ladder’. This means that they want to buy a house and start paying off the loan (mortgage) over the next twenty-five years. When they get promoted and have more money, they will sell the house and buy a larger, more expensive one (and have a bigger mortgage).

House prices have risen astronomically over the last few years and even the cheapest house is more than an average teacher, policeman, nurse or office worker can afford. More
young working people are living at home and continue to be supported by their parents because they cannot afford a **deposit to even start** the buying process.

If you have lots of money, there are plenty of different houses to choose from.

**COTTAGES**

The smallest traditional house in Britain is the cottage. The **cottage idyll** is picturesque and romantic; the garden will be full of roses and **herbs** and it will have a beautiful lawn. Many will have a **thatched, tile or slate** roof depending on where they are. The bedrooms (one or two) will be upstairs; the living room and kitchen downstairs.

**TERRACED HOUSES**

Long lines of terraced houses were built in industrial cities during the 19th century for the factory workers. They were typically quite basic with two bedrooms upstairs, a living room, a **cloakroom** and **utility room**. A kitchen will be a large kitchen and the ground floor will often be a **reception room** and a living area. There are four, five, bedrooms, some have bathrooms en suite and a separate family bathroom and toilet. The attic may have been converted into a studio, a bedroom or used just for storage.

Semi-detached houses are simply two houses joined side by side as a mirror image. These have fewer rooms and typically smaller gardens than detached houses. Some of them can be **very grand** while others are more modest.

**BUNGALOWS**

Another classic British house is the bungalow, which is a cheaper version of the detached house. They only have a ground floor, possibly with a **conservatory** at the back. They are seen as ideal retirement dwellings as there are no stairs for the elderly to climb.

**FLATS**

In Britain we also have flats in houses or in blocks of flats and their character is much the same as in the Czech Republic. Many Beautiful Victorian and Georgian town houses in cities have been converted into flats but these are not cheap either to rent or buy.

**UK HOUSING**

**mortgage** – hypotéka when they get promoted **is more than an average... can afford**

**DINING AREA**

**dining area** – jídelna

**herbs** – bylinky

**thatched** – doškový

**tile** – dlažba

**straight from** – přímo z

**cloakroom** – kloakrům

**utility room** – služební prostor

**storage** – skříně

**very grand** – veliký, velkolepý

**modest** – skromný

**conservatory** – skleník

**retirement dwelling** – bydlení na důchod

As there are no stairs for the elderly to climb **cottage idyll** – typická idylická chalupa

**Glossary**

utility room – a room in a private house with a washing machine, freezer, etc.

**reception room** (BrE) – a room in a private house where people can sit, for example a living room; the term is used mostly by people who sell houses

**bathroom en suite** (from French) – bathroom that is joined onto that bedroom

**study** – a separate family bathroom

**cloakroom** (BrE) – a room that is joined onto a bedroom and used only by people in that bedroom

**studio** – a small apartment, usually with one large room for sleeping and living in

**bridge** – a house that is on one of a row of houses that are joined together on each side with no garden.

Bungalows come in many variations; they may have two or three bedrooms, extra study space, etc.

**Vocabulary**

**when it comes to saying** – když přijde

**a string of houses attached together** – řetěz (from French)

**a cottage in Britain** – chalupa

**a terraced house** – domíčko