

1 Look at the photos. In which countries do you think they are typical homes?



2 Look at the photos in the article and identify the traditional homes and the modern homes. What features help you recognise them as traditional or modern? Which countries do you think they are in? Then read the article and check your guesses.

WHAT TYPE OF HOME DO YOU LIVE IN: TRADITIONAL OR MODERN?

Homes around the world are different from country to country. Some people live in houses and some live in flats. People often live in houses in rural areas, but in big cities they are more likely to live in flats because there is less space. Homes in the countryside are often more traditional, while in urban areas you find more modern homes that are built to house the growing population.

Oddur, Iceland

Oddur comes from Iceland. He lives in a colourful house on the outskirts of Reykjavik. It's modern with three bedrooms, a living room, an attic, a kitchen, a bathroom and a garage for the two family cars. However, his grandparents live in the countryside in an Icelandic turf house. These are traditional, detached houses and they have exterior grass roofs and walls to provide extra insulation in the harsh climate. When Oddur visited his grandparents last summer, he slept in a bed made of wood under the roof and it was very cosy. His grandparents' bedroom is downstairs next to the living room. Oddur loves the house, but it's very simple and there aren't many modern facilities like a shower or a dishwasher.

Icelandic turf houses were very common in the past, mainly because they were so cheap to construct. Indeed, turf building skills used to be handed down from one generation to the next. Perhaps these will see a resurgence with the modern interest in eco-friendly homes.



Lan, Vietnam

Lan is from Vietnam. She and her family live in a modern block of flats in Ho Chi Minh City. It's near her school and the shops so it's very convenient. There's even a communal garden with tropical plants and flowers for all the residents to enjoy. At the weekends, Lan sometimes goes to the countryside one hour from the city where her aunt, uncle and cousins live. Their house is in the traditional Vietnamese style. It's made of wood and is built on stilts to protect it from the flood waters of the nearby river during the rainy season. It's only got two rooms – one for living and one for sleeping. There's electricity and the family has a TV and a cooker, but there isn't a washing machine so Lan's aunt does the washing in the river. Lan really likes the house because it's made of wood, it's pretty and has a wide porch where they can enjoy long family lunches outdoors.

Lan's mum used to live in a similar traditional house when she was young. She moved to the city when she got married, but one day she would like to move back. 'The air is cleaner there', she explains.



- 3** Read the article again and put the words in the box in the correct column in the table.

attic | block of flats | colourful
convenient | cosy | detached
garage | garden | grass roof
porch | pretty | stilts

	traditional	modern
Iceland	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Vietnam	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

- 4** Read the statements and decide if they are an advantage (A) or a disadvantage (D) of living in a traditional or a modern home.

- There's more space in the countryside to live in a house. A / D
- Traditional homes don't always have the most up-to-date facilities. A / D
- City living is usually more practical for schools, shops and other urban needs. A / D
- Traditional homes are often more cosy and attractive. A / D
- Living in a flat means you usually share a garden with your neighbours. A / D
- Modern homes are designed better for families. A / D

OPTIMISE YOUR CULTURE

- 5** In pairs, or as a group, discuss the questions.

- Do you live in a traditional or a modern home? Are you happy about this? Would you prefer a different type of home?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of your home?
- Think about the traditional homes of your country. Why do you think they are built this way? Is the older generation more likely to live in these homes than the younger generation? Are these homes more commonly in rural or urban areas?

PROJECT

- 6** You are going to make a poster illustrating the traditional and modern style of homes in a country of your choice. Read the points and prepare your project research.

- Work in small groups. Research a traditional and a modern home and make notes on the following points:
 - what materials they are made of
 - why they are built this way
 - what their advantages and disadvantages are
 - whether they are mainly in rural or urban areas.
- In your groups, prepare your poster using the information you have gathered. Illustrate it with the two styles of homes and write a description of each using your notes.

- 7** Display your poster in the classroom. Move around and read the information from the other groups. What similarities and differences did each group find out about the traditional and modern homes of different countries? Compare and contrast the homes.