

The simple pleasures of piecing a summer holiday together at home

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Discuss the following questions in pairs.

1. What activities do you do on holiday?
2. Do you think staying home for the summer holidays is a good idea?

2 Key words

a. Complete the sentences using these key words from the text.

empty freelance inexpensive surrounded

1. If you work _____, you work on different projects for different companies.
2. If something is _____, it doesn't cost much.
3. If you are _____ by something, there is a lot of that thing around you.
4. If something is _____, there is nothing in it.

entire jealous nap trip

5. _____ means *complete*.
6. If you have a _____, you sleep during the day.
7. A _____ is a journey in which you go somewhere, usually for a short time.
8. If you feel _____, you feel unhappy because someone has something that you want.

b. Use the words from task a to complete the following sentences.

1. I felt _____ when he got all the best presents.
2. I don't like taking _____. I feel I'm wasting my time.
3. I'd love to work _____ and be my own boss.
4. I'm planning a _____ to Turkey right now.
5. The box is _____! Did you eat all the chocolates?

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Nova Weetman

25 December, 2023

- 1 When I was a kid, we spent our summer holidays at the pool. The concrete was so hot by the time we arrived that Mum would take towels for us to leave our stuff on. Then we went straight into the water where we stayed until we grew hungry.
- 2 We always holidayed at home in January, so for those long days after Christmas and before school started, there were the visits to the pool. Sometimes we'd go to the cinema, visit the library in town or get together with friends.
- 3 My summer holidays haven't actually changed much. I work freelance so I don't get paid holiday. This means that even if I have some time off in January,
- 4 I don't have enough money to do much. Some years we go camping with other families, which is an inexpensive way to swim in the sea and wake up surrounded by trees. But some years, I find myself in mid-December without a single plan.
- 5 I used to hate that, but I have learned to enjoy my city when most people leave. The streets are empty, businesses closed, and there is an entire lane at the swimming pool just for me.
- 6 When my kids were little, holidaying at home was often easier than organising nap times and car trips. They were happy to spend days by the pool and eat a picnic dinner before going to bed. Now, as teenagers, they enjoy spending their long summer break at home, just lying in bed watching television or hanging out with friends.
- 7 Without the structure of school or work, we spend our days reading books, watching TV series and cleaning. While friends spend weeks at the beach, posting photos that sometimes make me jealous, we stay up late and catch up with friends who are also in town.
- 8 After the pandemic, we were all desperate to leave our houses and towns. But that feeling is now gone, and I'm enjoying the thought of staying home and catching up with friends who I never have time to see. But my favourite thing to do if I'm holidaying at home is to buy a jigsaw puzzle, clear the dining table and open the box of pieces, making a start on the edge. There I'll sit for hours, refilling my cup of tea, the cat circling my feet, as I work my way through the scene and forget time.

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3 Comprehension check

a. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F) according to the article? Correct any that are false.

1. The author travelled with her parents every January.
2. The author used to spend time with friends during the summer.
3. She doesn't have free time in January.
4. Camping is a good option if you don't want to spend much.
5. Her children don't like staying at home for the summer.
6. The author usually meets friends during the summer.
7. She really wants to travel and leave her house in summer.

4 Key language

a. Match the halves to form sentences from the article.

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|--|---|
| 1. Then we went straight into the water ... | a. when most people leave. |
| 2. I'm enjoying the thought of staying home and catching up with friends ... | b. where we stayed until we grew hungry. |
| 3. I used to hate that, but I have learned to enjoy my city ... | c. which is an inexpensive way to swim in the sea and wake up surrounded by trees. |
| 4. Some years we go camping with other families, ... | d. who I never have time to see. |

b. Look at the highlighted words in task a and answer these questions.

1. Which word do we use to add information about **places**?
2. Which word do we use to add information about **times**?
3. Which word do we use to add information about **people**?
4. Which word do we use to add information about **things**?

c. Complete the following sentences using *where*, *when*, *which* or *who*.

1. That's the place _____ I met Robin.
2. Do you remember the name of the person _____ told you about this?
3. I think that was the moment _____ I realised I wanted to be a doctor.
4. Is that the bag _____ you bought in Milan?
5. The living room is _____ I spend most of my free time.

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5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "I enjoy my city in the weeks where most people leave."
- "My favourite thing to do is binge-watching TV shows on my computer."

6 In your own words

a. Work in pairs or small groups. Plan your ideal holiday. Use these questions to help you:

- Where would you like to go?
- When would you like to travel?
- Who would you go with?
- Which activities would you do there?