

**Exercise 3**

Read the article about underground homes, and then complete the notes.

Underground homes



Many thousands of years ago, long before the development of houses, people found shelter underground in caves that were either naturally formed or created by early humans. In recent years, there has been a trend towards living underground once more, in homes that are partly or almost entirely buried or surrounded by rock. Although interest in this type of home is steadily growing, suitable sites are limited, so it is unlikely that we will all end up living in one in the near future. Part of the attraction of building an underground home is that construction costs are low if an appropriate location can be found.

Underground homes vary a great deal in their design. Some are completely underground except for one external wall, in which there is a door to allow entry into the property and perhaps some windows. This type of home may lack interior light, which many people find a struggle to cope with. These homes are, however, extremely energy efficient as heat cannot easily escape from them into the surrounding atmosphere. An example of this type of home can be found in the mid-western United States. Home to a family of four, most of the building is hidden inside a small, grass-covered hill, which reduces damage to the landscape. An unexpected issue that can sometimes occur with this kind of home, which has trees and plants growing on top of it, is that the roots can damage the building. However, a special protective material is usually fitted to the building to prevent this from happening.

Other homes are only partly underground, and sections of their structure may appear very similar to more conventional houses from the front. One such property in Spain, for instance, looks exactly like a normal house when viewed from outside, with a typical roof, several windows and a front door facing out onto the road. However, a large amount of the living space is hidden in the hill behind it. As with all underground homes, this astonishing property is far easier to maintain than traditional houses, which is one of the many things that might attract a buyer.

Anyone exploring an underground home for the first time is highly likely to notice a particular characteristic which appeals to many people: the complete lack of background noise. When your home is covered or surrounded by tonnes and tonnes of soil or rock, very little sound can get in from outside. Another feature of underground homes, which is less favourable, is the poor air quality found in many of them. However, for those people who have chosen to buy an underground home, they generally find that there are more benefits to living in such buildings than there are disadvantages.



Question 9

Disadvantages of underground homes:

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[Total: 7]

