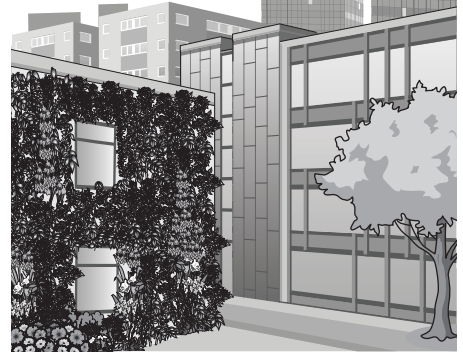


Exercise 3

Read the article about the trend in growing plants on the outside walls of buildings, and then complete the notes.

Living walls

Living walls, also known as vertical gardens, are becoming increasingly popular in cities all around the world, from Paris to Mexico City. It's easy to see why this is the case – they bring nature into urban environments. You can find living walls on a wide range of buildings, including office blocks, hotels, libraries, cafés, hospitals and many more. However, it's not just large organisations that are including living walls in the designs of their buildings. Many individuals are also starting to grow plants on the outside walls of their homes, although maybe on a smaller scale.



So why is there such a trend for these living walls? One possible explanation can be found by looking at scientific research. Recent studies have proven what many people already knew to be true – that being near green spaces can improve people's mood. Whether that green space is a park, forest or living wall doesn't really seem to matter. However, that being said, some people don't realise that living walls require a lot of hard work to maintain. For this reason, many companies have started to employ professional gardeners to look after their living walls, as they would with an ordinary garden. It's also worth mentioning that living walls can create mess, for example from leaves falling on the ground below. This is certainly worth bearing in mind for anyone who is thinking of installing a living wall.

An additional appeal of covering your walls with plants is the fact that living walls reduce heat loss. Of course, how well the living walls perform depends very much on aspects such as which direction they face, the climate, the plant type used and how much of the wall is covered. It's worth pointing out, however, that living walls can be expensive and because of this, many people may be unable to afford to install them in the first place.

Living walls are particularly welcome in cities where air pollution levels are high. Over the years, cities have seen many of their green spaces gradually disappear, being replaced by housing or shops and offices. This, together with increased road traffic, and sometimes even air traffic, has left some cities with very poor air quality. Living walls make the surrounding air cleaner, which obviously benefits all residents.

When thinking about installing a living wall, it's important to consider what kind of plants to grow on it. It's definitely worth getting some advice before buying any. Some plants are very strong, so choosing the wrong ones for your living wall could result in damage to your property. You may also want to consider selecting plants you can eat. Many people love the fact that a living wall could provide a source of food.

Whatever your view on living walls, they seem to be an increasingly popular feature of modern cities around the world.

Question 8

Reasons why living walls are popular:

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