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The British people as they are



*«Not only England, but every
Englishman is an island»*

(Novalis, German poet)

Great Britain is an island on the outer edge of the European continent, and its geographical situation has produced a certain insular spirit among its inhabitants. They regard their own community as the centre of the world.

English characteristics

- * In a nation of many million people, there are many different kinds: good and bad, honest and dishonest, happy and unhappy.
- * The best known quality of the English is reserve. A reserve person is one who does not talk very much to strangers, does not show his emotion. He never tells you anything about himself.

Family life

- * The English are the nation of stay-at-home. «There is no place like home», they say. After work the Englishman is at home with his wife and children. Englishmen love familiar things.



The British are careful about almost everything.

- * Their lawns are closely cropped, their flower beds are primly cultivated and their trees are neatly pruned. Everything is orderly.



English people like domestic animals. Every family has a pet:
a dog, a cat or a bird.





Fact

There is a pet in nearly 50% of the 24.2 million homes in Britain.

- * On Friday when the Englishmen leave work they say to each other «*Have a nice week-end.*» Then on Monday morning they ask, «*Did you have a nice week-end?*»



Leisure time activities

- * On Sunday morning the English come out to mow grass, wash the car, take the dog for a walk or work in the. Gardening is the most popular activity.



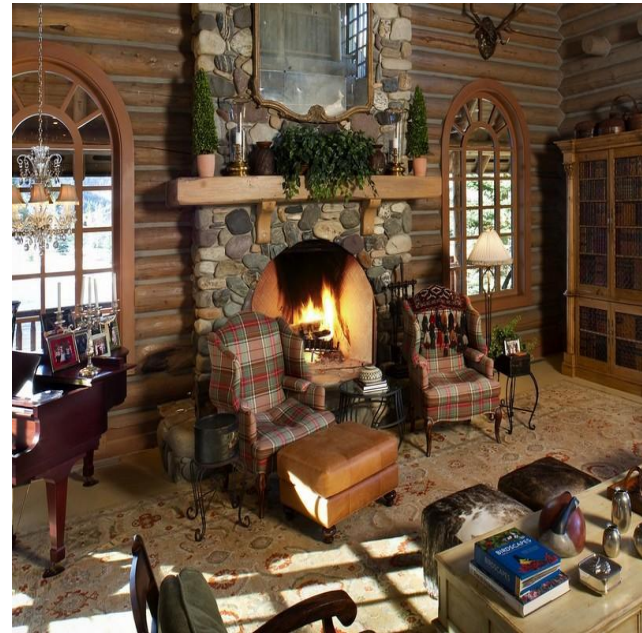
Would you like a cup of tea?

- * The British people are the worlds greatest tea drinkers. Many of them drink tea on least eight different occasions during the day. Tea is a suitable occasion for people to chat over their cup of tea.



The fireplace in English homes

- * In English homes, the fireplace has always been, until recent times, the natural centre of interest in a room. People like to sit round the fire and watch the dancing flames for many months of the year.



The British are proud of their traditions.

- * The British are known to be tradition lovers. They preserve and follow their traditions.



When two Englishmen meet, their first talk is of the weather. (S. Johnson, English poet)

- * The British are known to talk about the weather all the time. They repeat the phrase «Lovely day, isnt it?» at least two hundred times a day. Britain was never famous for good weather.



English habits of politeness

Some greetings in England are very informal: a simple «*good morning*» or a wave of the hand across the street is quite enough.

«*Sorry*» takes the place of «no» when you cannot do something for a person. «*Pardon*» is the polite way of asking somebody to repeat what he has said.



The famous English sense of humour

- * The English take everything with a sense of humour. « He is a man of humour» or «He has no sense of humour» is often heard in Britain, where *humour* is so highly prized. The English are only offended if you tell them they have no sense of humour.



The fashion for seaside holidays

- * It was the British who started the fashion for seaside holidays. Not surprisingly, nobody in Britain lives more than one hundred and twenty kilometres from the sea. Many families prefer to drive to the warm south and camp in comfortable campsites. The nearest holiday area of France is only three or four hundred kilometres away. Spain is also popular.

The nearest holiday area of France is only three or four hundred kilometres away. The Mediterranean coast is also popular.




The English are a sporting nation


The English like different kinds of sport.


They often play football and cricket.

There is Manchester United football club in Britain.



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- * English people as a nation have been for centuries secure, serene in their national successes. English patriotism is based on a deep sense of security. They have the reputation as men of poetry – the countrymen of *Shakespeare* and *Shelley*.
 - * «*We know what we are, but we know not what we may be*» (*W. Shakespeare*)

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- * The apparent coldness of Englishmen and their reserve has been almost universally noted by foreigners; but foreigners also confess that they find English reserve not unpleasant, and that once one gets to know an Englishman he turns out to be a very companionable fellow.

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