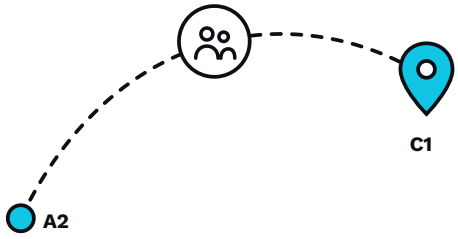
SPEAKING TOPICS · TEMAS DE CONVERSACIÓN · A2 → C1

Family



Words, phrases and questions to talk about the people closest to you — at your level.

Todo lo que necesitas para hablar de tu familia en inglés, ordenado por nivel del Marco Común Europeo (MCER).

1. **Find your level.** Start with your column, then try the next one.
2. **Say it out loud.** Read every example sentence aloud — twice.
3. **Make it yours.** Answer the questions on page 3 about **your** life.

1 Vocabulary by level

Vocabulario por nivel

A2 Elementary	B1 Intermediate	B2 Upper-int.	C1 Advanced
parents padres	**siblings** hermanos (en general)	**extended family** familia extensa	**close-knit** muy unido
relatives familiares	**nephew / niece** sobrino / sobrina	**upbringing** educación, crianza	**nuclear family** familia nuclear
cousin primo/a	**in-laws** familia política	**generation gap** brecha generacional	**foster family** familia de acogida
grandparents abuelos	**stepmother** madrastra	**role model** modelo a seguir	**ancestry** ascendencia
aunt / uncle tía / tío	**half-brother** medio hermano	**sibling rivalry** rivalidad entre hermanos	**heirloom** reliquia familiar
only child hijo/a único/a	**partner** pareja	**supportive** que apoya	**overprotective** sobreprotector/a
twins gemelos/mellizos	**strict** estricto/a	**easy-going** tolerante, tranquilo	**spouse** cónyuge
married casado/a	**close** unido/a	**household chores** tareas del hogar	**bond** vínculo

2 Phrasal verbs in action

Phrasal verbs con ejemplos

look after A2
take care of someone
My grandma **looks after** my little brother after school.

grow up B1
change from a child to an adult
I **grew up** in a small village near Lorca.

take after B2
look or act like an older relative
Everyone says I **take after** my dad.

look up to B2
admire and respect someone
I've always **looked up to** my older brother.

get on (with) B1
have a good relationship
I **get on** really well **with** my sister.

bring up B1
raise a child
My aunt **brought up** three children on her own.

fall out (with) B2
stop being friendly after an argument
My cousins **fell out** over the inheritance.

pass down C1
give something to a younger generation
This ring has been **passed down** for four generations.

3 Relatives, parents or siblings?

La trampa de "parientes"

NOUN · MUM AND DAD ONLY

parents

Only your **mother and father**. Not "parientes"!

> **My parents live in Cartagena.**

NOUN · ALL THE FAMILY

relatives

Everyone in your family: aunts, cousins, grandparents... (also **relations**).

> **We have relatives all over Spain.**

NOUN · BROTHERS AND SISTERS

siblings

Your **brothers and sisters** together. "Hermanos" with mixed genders.

> **I have two siblings: a brother and a sister.**

4 Idioms & expressions

Para sonar como un nativo

run in the family B2
be common in a family
Red hair runs in our family.

like father, like son B2
children are similar to their parents
He's a chef too — like father, like son.

the apple of my eye B2
the person you love most
My granddaughter is the apple of my eye.

the black sheep B2
the member who is very different
I'm the black sheep of the family.

tie the knot B2
get married
They tied the knot in Mallorca last June.

the spitting image of C1
look exactly like
You're the spitting image of your mum.

a chip off the old block C1
very similar to a parent
She's a chip off the old block — so stubborn!

follow in someone's footsteps C1
do the same job/life as a relative
He followed in his mum's footsteps.

blood is thicker than water C1
family comes first
We argue, but blood is thicker than water.

empty nest C1
home after children leave
My parents found the empty nest hard at first.

5 Spanish speakers' traps

Errores típicos

✗ ~~All my parents came: uncles, cousins...~~
✓ **All my relatives came.**
parents = only mum and dad

✗ ~~I have two brothers: a boy and a girl.~~
✓ **I have two siblings.**
mixed genders = **siblings**

✗ ~~My sister has 25 years.~~
✓ **My sister is 25.**
age = **be**, not "have"

✗ ~~I take care my grandmother.~~
✓ **I take care of my grandmother.**
take care **of** / look **after**

✗ ~~My familiy are very big.~~
✓ **My family is very big.**
one family → **is** (spelling: family)

✗ ~~He is married with Ana.~~
✓ **He is married to Ana.**
married **to** someone

6 Quick check

¿Lo has pillado?

1. I take after / take off my mum.
2. She's the spitting / spilling image of her dad.
3. I get on / get in very well with my cousins.
4. They brought up / grew up six kids.
5. I'm the black / white sheep of the family.
6. All my parents / relatives came to my birthday.

Answers: 1 take after · 2 spitting · 3 get on · 4 brought up · 5 black · 6 relatives

7 Questions for your level

Practica en voz alta

A2 Cambridge A2 Key style

1. How many people are there in your family?
2. Who do you live with?
3. What do you like doing with your family?
4. Tell me about your best friend in your family.

B1 Cambridge B1 Preliminary style

1. Who are you most similar to in your family? Why?
2. How do you usually celebrate family birthdays?
3. Do you prefer big or small families? Why?

B2 Cambridge B2 First style

1. Who in your family do you look up to most, and why?
2. How has your relationship with your parents changed as you've grown up?
3. Is it better to be an only child or to have siblings?

C1 Cambridge C1 Advanced style · discussion

1. How have family structures in Spain changed over the last 50 years?
2. Should grandparents play a bigger role in raising children?
3. To what extent do we inherit our personality from our family?

8 Level up your answer

Sube de nivel

"Who are you closest to in your family?"

A2	My sister. She is **very nice**. We go to the cinema together.	Simple present + basic adjectives.
B1	I'm closest to my sister, **who** is two years older than me. We **get on really well** and talk about everything.	**Relative clause** + a useful phrasal verb.
B2	Probably my grandmother. She **brought me up** while my parents were working, so **I've always looked up to her**.	Phrasal verbs + present perfect to show a long relationship.
C1	**It would have to be** my older brother. We **fell out** as teenagers, but **if anything**, that's made our bond even stronger.	Natural hedging + discourse markers to add nuance.

9 Keep talking

Frases para alargar tu respuesta

Describe a person

He/She is the kind of person who...
What I love about her is...
He always manages to...

Compare

I'm much more ... than my brother.
Unlike my parents, I...
We're similar in that...

Tell a memory

I'll never forget the time we...
When I was little, we used to...
Every summer, we would...

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