

INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Character Description

Stages of Life

There are not clear rules about these names and ages but generally, a **baby** is aged about 0 – 1, a **toddler** is 2 – 3, a **child** is 0 – 13, a **teenager** is 13 – 19. You are officially an **adult** when you are 18. The **elderly** is a general term for old people. You can talk about old people but the elderly is more polite. This is because people do not like to be described as old. Elderly people are also sometimes called **senior citizens**. You are a senior citizen after retirement age (about 65).



If you do not know how old someone is, you can guess that they are in their twenties, thirties, forties, etc. This means that they are somewhere between 20 and 30, 30 and 40 etc. You can also say that you or someone else is thirty- or forty- something if you don't want to say what your exact age is or if you don't know someone's age. You can be in your early, mid or late teens, twenties, etc. If you are in your early twenties, you are 20 – 25. If you are in your late forties, you are 45 – 50. Mid means "in the middle" so if you are in your mid thirties, you are 34 – 36. You can say that someone is **middle-aged**. This means that they are more or less in the middle of their life – neither young nor old. However, people don't usually like to be called middle-aged.

Appearance (What does he/she look like?)



There are many ways of describing the way people look. You often use adjectives which can be positive or negative in meaning. They can also be neutral. You need to be careful which adjectives you use. Many negative adjectives are in fact considered to be rude because they could hurt someone's feelings. For example, it's more polite to describe someone as "overweight" than to say they are fat (though if you call someone either they might think you were being rude).

You can use these adjectives for describing people:

-height: tall, medium height, short, small

-figure: slim, slender, very thin, skinny, a neat figure, be medium built, plump, full-figured, be overweight, heavy, fat, stout, thickset, giant, bandy-legged, have a shapely body, well-proportioned, have an athletic build, broad shoulders, stocky

-good looks: beautiful, pretty, cute, attractive, charming, gorgeous, good-looking, handsome, elegant, romantic, homely-looking, plain, look like a sportsman, sexy, have above average looks

-hair: long (to the shoulders), short, straight, wavy, curly, permed, fringe, chignon, loose, pony-tail, plait, light/fair/blonde, dark, auburn, light/dark brown, red/ginger, grey, greyish, tinted. beard, sideboards, moustache, bald headed, be getting bald

-face: round, oval, angular, soft features, nondescript, wrinkled, freckled

-cheeks: plump, hollow, protruding cheek-bones

-eyes: blue-eyed, deep blue, dark, grey, hazel, hazel-green, sparkling

-nose: straight, hooked, aquiline, snub

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- mouth**: wide, small, narrow, sensual lips, even teeth
- skin complexion**: pale, tanned, dark
- defects**: wear glasses, contact lenses, cross-eyed, short-sighted, blind, deaf, dumb,...

Character (What is he/she like?)

There are lots of adjectives to describe people's character or personality. Here are some of them:

- honest or dishonest = someone who does or doesn't tell the truth
- hard-working or lazy = someone who does or doesn't work hard
- reliable or unreliable = someone who you can or can't trust
- generous or mean = someone who does or doesn't give/share things with others
- talkative or quiet = someone who does or doesn't talk a lot
- polite or rude = someone who does or doesn't have good manners
- intelligent or stupid = someone who is or isn't very clever
- kind or unkind = someone who does or doesn't help people
- optimistic or pessimistic = someone who always thinks good/bad things are going to happen
- patient or impatient = someone who doesn't or does mind waiting
- funny or serious = someone who does or doesn't like telling jokes
- decisive or indecisive = someone who does or doesn't make decisions easily
- sensitive or insensitive = someone who does or doesn't perceive other people's feelings
- ambitious or unambitious = someone who does or doesn't try very hard to be successful
- tidy or untidy = someone who does or doesn't put things away
- loyal or disloyal = someone who is or isn't your friend for a long time
- tolerant or intolerant = someone who does or doesn't listen to other people's opinions
- active or inactive/passive = someone who does or doesn't get a lot of exercise
- lucky or unlucky = someone who usually does or doesn't have good luck
- precise = too careful, fussy about details
- cautious = careful, taking care, paying attention to
- punctual = doing something at the time fixed, neither early nor late
- dull = slow in understanding



- irresolute = undecided, hesitating
- irritable = easily annoyed or made angry
- self-confident = believing in one's own abilities
- stubborn = difficult to deal with, determined, obstinate
- sympathetic = sharing the feelings of others, feeling pity or tenderness
- tender = delicate, easily hurt or damaged, quickly feeling pain
- furious = violent, uncontrolled
- inquisitive = eager to know, learn
- ingenious = clever and skilful (at making or inventing)
- curious = fond of inquiring into other people's affairs
- conceited = full of over-high opinion of, too much pride in oneself
- dutiful = doing one's duty well, showing respect and obedience
- impudent = shamelessly rude, rudely disrespectful
- wary = cautious, looking out for possible danger or trouble
- reluctant = (slow to act because) unwilling or disinclined to do st.
- strict = demanding and enforcing obedience
- lively = full of life and spirit
- modest = having a not too high opinion of one's merits and abilities
- moody = often changing his/her mood



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-easy-going = always happy

Star Sign Personalities

For thousands of years, people have been looking to the sky for a glimpse into the future. This fortune telling, called astrology, is based on the belief that the position of the stars at our time of birth and the movement of the planets affect our personality and even our destiny. Horoscopes for all zodiac signs are published daily on the net and in newspapers. Here you can check if your personality conforms to your star sign.

Aries (March 21st – April 19th)

-courageous, brilliant, selfish, impatient, self-confident

Taurus (April 20th – May 20th)

-patient, loyal, stubborn, slow, sensible, outgoing

Gemini (May 21st – June 21st)

-curious, entertaining, nervous, chatty, sociable, moody

Cancer (June 22nd – July 22nd)

-imaginative, sensitive, moody, self-absorbed, insecure

Leo (July 23rd – August 22nd)

-proud, generous, bossy, selfish, self-confident

Virgo (August 23rd – September 22nd)

-clever, caring, fussy, unsocial, generous, interesting

Libra (September 23rd – October 23rd)

-sophisticated, artistic, passive, indecisive, easy-going

Scorpio (October 24th – November 21st)

-intense, ambitious, secretive, jealous, friendly, interesting

Sagittarius (November 22nd – December 21st)

-curious, sporty, superficial, careless, insensitive, cheerful

Capricorn (December 22nd – January 19th)

-ambitious, creative, materialistic, pessimistic, shy, impulsive

Aquarius (January 20th – February 18th)

-original, intellectual, stubborn, detached, friendly, impulsive

Pisces (February 19th – March 20th)

-sensitive, romantic, lazy, self-indulgent, chatty, selfish



Month	Day	Sign	Symbol	Element	Quality	Color
March	21	Aries	♈	Fire	Cardinal	Red
April	21	Taurus	♉	Earth	Fixed	Green
May	21	Gemini	♊	Air	Cardinal	Yellow
June	21	Cancer	♋	Water	Fixed	Blue
July	23	Leo	♌	Fire	Fixed	Orange
August	23	Virgo	♍	Earth	Cardinal	Light Green
September	23	Libra	♎	Air	Fixed	Pink
October	23	Scorpio	♏	Water	Fixed	Dark Red
November	23	Sagittarius	♐	Fire	Cardinal	Brown
December	23	Capricorn	♑	Earth	Fixed	Dark Green
January	23	Jan 1	♒	Air	Fixed	Light Blue
February	23	Pisces	♓	Water	Cardinal	Dark Blue



People you know, greetings

Colleagues are the people that you work with. You use the word **neighbour** for people who live near to where you live. If you share a flat with someone, you have a **flatmate**. If you share a house, you have a **housemate**. You use the word **classmate** to talk about someone who is in the same class as you at school. You use the word **acquaintance** for people you don't know well. You may only have met them once or twice. This isn't a very common word. You use **best, close or closest friend** for the friend who is most important to you. The **old friend** is someone you've known for a long time. You use the word **partner** for someone you love and (often) live with. You use **girl/boyfriend** for someone you're having a relationship with. Generally, adults talk about their partners rather than using girlfriend and boyfriend. You use the words **go out with** someone to talk about a relationship you are having. You use the expression **fall out with** someone to say that you are no longer friends with them.

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You can **shake hands** with people. You **hug/embrace** someone you know well. These friendly greetings are different in different countries.



For example, the **Germans** shake hands with each member of a group and amongst men, one of two firm “pumps” are usual. However, they consider shaking hands while your other hand is in your pocket very rude. Cheek kissing is rare – only at home and amongst close friends.

The **French** prefer a light, quick, single handshake at every opportunity. Close friends, family members and young people often give two, three or even four kisses. It is not really kissing – but “touching cheeks” and “kissing the air”.

In the **Netherlands** and **Poland**, three kisses are expected among people in a friendly relation.

Greetings in **Japan** are very formal and ritualized. Japanese people don’t shake hands and don’t kiss each other. Their traditional form of greeting is the bow. How far you bow depends upon your relationship to the other person as well as the situation. The deeper you bow, the more respect you show.

During the previous political regime in the **Eastern bloc**, politicians used to greet each other with a warm embrace and one or more real kisses.

In the **USA**, if you are introduced to someone for the first time in a more formal setting, you will usually shake hands when you first meet and before you leave. If there is a group of friends introducing new friends in an informal setting, they will usually just say hello, nice to meet you and maybe wave.

The **British** don’t tend to shake hands unless it’s a very formal situation. Hugging is accepted as an expression of affection (=liking) as may be back slapping after a few beers. Kissing is not something the English do naturally when they meet. This demonstration of greeting is most common amongst the upper middle classes or artistic groups. It’s never “man to man”.

Although **Czechs** are not strong “touchers”, they usually shake hands on arrival and when leaving.

Kissing and hugging depends on their relationship.

Birth Order Theory

This theory says that your character partly depends on your position in your family.

Oldest children are often very confident, perhaps because they get a lot of attention when they are born.

They are also very determined: if they start a job, they finish it. Parents often ask oldest children to look after their younger brothers and sisters, so they are usually very sensible. They like to be the leaders. They are also well organised. Almost all of the US presidents have been oldest children.

Parents are often more relaxed with second and third children. As a result, the **middle children** are also more relaxed and easy-going than their older brothers and sisters. Middle children are quite positive.

When they play a game, they don’t worry too much if they lose. They make friends easily, and they work hard to keep their friends. They can see both sides of a situation or problem, but this means that sometimes they are quite indecisive. Sometimes they feel they don’t get enough attention in the family.

Britney Spears is a famous middle child, and so is Donald Trump, one of the richest men in the USA.

The **youngest children** work very hard to get attention. They love to make people laugh and they like to be the centre of attention. They can be funny and talkative. They like telling stories, sometimes true stories, sometimes not true stories. Sometimes, however, they still think they don’t get enough attention.

And they can also get angry because people don’t take them seriously. Some very famous comedy actors are youngest children, for example, Jim Carrey, Eddie Murphy and Billy Crystal.

Only children can often be very self-confident and well-spoken because they spend a lot of time with adults and not much time with other children. People often think of them as “little adults”. They are not afraid to make decisions. They like things to be well organised. Because they like everything to be perfect, they can get angry if they don’t do something really well. They have got a good memory for facts and



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numbers. Perhaps because they haven't got brothers or sisters to talk to, they often read a lot. Some famous only children are, e.g. Robert de Niro and Robin Williams.

Vocabulary

polite	zdvořilý	hollow	prázdný, vpadlý
retirement	důchod	protruding	vyčnívající
guess	odhadnout, hádat	aquiline	orlí
rude	drzí, hrubý, nezdvořilý	snub	tupý
neat	pohledný	decission	rozhodnutí
plump	baculatý	hesitate	pochybovat
stout	silný, tlustý	obstinate	tvrdohlavý, umíněný
permed	naondulovaný	inquire	informovat se, tázat se
fringe	ofina	obediance	poslušnost
chignon	drdol	merit	zásluha
plain	hladký	mood	nálada
auburn	kaštanový	fussy	malicherný
tinted	obarvený	superficial	povrchní
angular	hrnatý	indulgent	shovívavý
wrinkled	vrásčitý	bow	poklonit se, poklona
freckled	pihovatý		

Tasks

1. Describe the looks and character of your parents, brother/sister, best friend, ideal husband/wife, boss.
2. Write the opposites of these words:
honest
lazy
generous
talkative
polite
stupid
serious
passive
precise
modest
3. What's your star sign? Does your character correspond with it?
4. What's your position in your family? Do you agree with the birth order theory?

Sources of information

Časopis Bridge
Horizons 2, OUP 2004, Radley, Simons, Campbell
Vocabulary pre-intermediate, OUP 2006, Kenna Bourke
Topics for English Conversation, FRAGMENT 1995, Chudá, Chudý
Google

Solutions

- 1., 3., 4. – students' own answers
2. dishonest, hard-working, mean, quiet, rude, intelligent/clever, funny, active, reluctant, self-confident/proud