

Strange Lifestyles

Match the given images with the corresponding descriptions and discuss with your partner a) in what ways you would (not) fancy having these lifestyles, b) what other lifestyles you happen to know of that you find "strange", and c) to what extent you are (not) satisfied with your own lifestyle. Look up the bold printed words in a dictionary if you don't know them.



Born Gary Matthews, a retired technology worker and self-confessed "nerd" thinks that he is a dog. The 48-year-old wears a **dog collar**, eats dog food from a bowl — his favorite is Pedigree — and loves milk bones and dog cookies. He even barks, chases cars, and digs for bones in the backyard like any other canine. The guy sleeps in his own indoor doghouse which, according to him, is much more comfortable than a human bed.

All Lynea Lattanzio wanted was a cat when she was little, but her mother didn't **approve**. So now she lives alone with hundreds of **felines** on her 12-acre spread in Parlier, California, where she runs a huge **cat sanctuary**. There are at least 700 cats in her care, she says, as well as 15 dogs. She survives thanks to donations and grants.

If you ever need to know who the prime minister was in 1960 and you're willing to wait 10 minutes for the answer, Blair McMillan is your man. He'll take his time carefully **thumbing through** a volume of his **vintage** encyclopedia set, which was donated by a **bewildered soul** who probably wondered why the 26-year-old father of two couldn't just get an Internet connection. The thing is that Blair and his girlfriend Morgan, 27, from Canada are pretending that it's 1986. They're doing it because their kids — Trey, 5, and Denton, 2 — wouldn't look up from their parents' iPhones and iPads long enough to kick a ball around the backyard. That's why their house has banned any technology that is post-1986, the year when the couple was born.

Unlike many people, Kyle Kandlian, a university student from Dearborn, Michigan, is not only **unafraid of cockroaches**, but he lives with tens of thousands of these insects; he **estimates** that he currently keeps about 200,000 in his home. The 20-year-old man collects and breeds cockroaches both for fun and profit. Apparently, this unusual hobby is helping him pay for an education at the Michigan-Dearborn University.

When mother-of-two Maria Butzki left her husband Paul for another man, she didn't realize how much she'd miss him. At the same time, she couldn't imagine living without her new lover Peter Gruman. So when the two men **struck up** an **extraordinary** friendship, she came up with the perfect solution... and moved Peter into the family home in Barking, East London. Now Maria, 33, Paul, 37, their two children, Laura, 16, and Amy, 12, and Peter, 36, live as one big happy family.

The Rainbow Family is a loose association of hippie tribes with their roots in the 1960s and '70s. Many people of all ages have **kept up** the ideal hippie lifestyle by traveling from place to place, forming regional gatherings, and living outside **mainstream society**. There are lots of adventures to be had on the hippie trail, from listening to old stories about the **counterculture**, to singing great songs by the fire, to escaping bad weather and storms with **minimal gear** and shelter.

Topic Boosters

What are your top five aspects defining a happy life? Rank your criteria according to importance and explain your list in class.

"My lifestyle is a consequence of my wounds. I'm the son of my history (*Jose Mujica*)."
Discuss how you interpret this quote and how it relates to your life.

What role does technology play in your life? As you explain, mention a number of advantages and/or disadvantages you see in using modern communication devices such as smartphones or laptops.

Explain in what respects you consider Maria Butzki's decision to have a relationship with two men moral and/or immoral.

How would you explain Gary Matthews' behaviour in psychological terms?

Explain in what ways you (don't) believe Blair McMillan's children benefit from their parents' technology related measures.



Texts taken from the following websites in abridged or changed form:

http://www.oddee.com/item_98788.aspx

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/ten-awesome-alternative-lifestyles.html>