

Happiness

A recent survey about what makes people happy has come up with surprising results. Can money make you happy?

1 What makes you happy? Choose the three most important things in the box below. Discuss these with a partner.

family life gadgets luxury car interesting job leisure time nice clothes
 money home ownership good health travel control over your life

2 Complete the 4 missing countries in the table below from the following list: *Australia / America / Brazil / Canada / France / Hungary / Japan / Russia / Sweden / UK*. Check your answers by scanning paragraph two of the article.

Survey results: levels of happiness			
% of people who feel 'very happy':		% of people who feel 'very unhappy':	
1.	(46%)	1.	(35%)
2.	(40%)	2.	(30%)
3. Egypt	(36%)	3. Turkey	(28%)

Results based on:
GfK NOP

Can money buy happiness?

How can we measure happiness? Every year, a UK market research company carries out a survey of consumer attitudes, values and behaviours. 30,000 people in 30 countries are asked to assess their 'quality of life'. There are a number of possible replies: people can say if they feel 'very happy', 'satisfied', 'disappointed' or 'very unhappy'. The good news? Globally, 20% of people claim to be 'very happy' and a huge 62% are 'satisfied'.

At 46%, Australia had the highest number of people who felt they were 'very happy', followed by the USA with 40%. Canada and the UK shared fifth position, at 32%. The country at the bottom of the so-called 'happiness chart' is Hungary, with 35% of its citizens saying they were 'very unhappy' or 'disappointed', followed by Russia (30%). Countries as

diverse as Sweden and Brazil scored highly, while Japan and France were at the bottom end of the chart.

What makes for good 'quality of life'? At the top of the list of what makes people happy is good health. After that come financial security, home ownership and a happy marriage and children. Control over one's life, having an interesting job and leisure time also ranked high in the list. Interestingly, material possessions, such as luxury cars, nice clothes and owning gadgets, were rated quite low. While it seems that money doesn't buy happiness, if you don't have money, then it may well lead to unhappiness. Many unhappy people earn very little, or they are unemployed. Happy people were found to be more optimistic. Many believe, for instance, that 'now' is a good time to spend money, and feel confident that they will be wealthier in a year's time.

3 Read the whole article. Were you surprised by any of the survey results?

4 Find opposites for the following words taken from the article.

- (a) satisfied (b) security (c) interesting (d) unemployment (e) confident (f) wealthier

5 Complete the questionnaire and compare your answers in small groups. Be ready to report your results to the class.

Market research questionnaire

(Tick the answer which shows your opinion)

(1) Can money make you happier?	Yes	No	Not sure
(2) How do you feel about the future?	Optimistic	Pessimistic	Neither
(3) Do you have control over your life?	Yes	No	Not sure
(4) Which best describes your culture:	"We work to live"	"We live to work"	