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| Welcome to EnglishClass101.com’s English in Three Minutes. The fastest, easiest, and most fun way to learn English. | |
| Hey everyone, I’m Alisha! | |
| In this series, we’re going to learn some easy ways to ask and answer common questions in English. It’s really useful, and it only takes three minutes! | |
| In this lesson, you’re going to learn how to ask someone about their family, asking whether they have any brothers or sisters. | |
| Asking someone about their family is nearly always a good topic of conversation. After all, most people love to talk about their family, right? In some English textbooks you’ll see the question: “Do you have any siblings?” but actually we rarely use the word “siblings” in natural, casual spoken English. | |
| So in order to ask this question naturally, all you say is: | |
| “Do you have any brothers or sisters?” | |
| Remember that in English, we hardly ever say “sisters or brothers”. It’s one of those phrases with a set word order, like “black and white” - “brothers or sisters”. | |
| So the other person’s answer to this question will probably be one of the following. | |
| “Yeah, I have two brothers/a brother and a sister/two sisters/etc.” | |
| Sometimes they’ll give details about ages, and say something like: | |
| “Yeah, I have two younger brothers.” | |
| Or: |  |
| “Yeah, I have a younger brother and an older sister.” | |
| And so on. | |
| Note that some people say “elder” instead of “older”, but they both mean the same thing. | |
| If the other person doesn’t give details about the ages of his/her brothers and sisters, though, you can ask a polite follow-up question to show you’re interested. | |
| “Is s/he older or younger (than you)?” | |
| “Are they older or younger (than you)?” | |
| The “than you” at the end is optional, as it’s understood from the context. | |
| But what happens if the other person doesn’t have any brothers or sisters? There’s a set phrase for this in English, and that’s... | |
| “I’m an only child.” | |
| Now it’s time for Alisha’s Advice! | |
| When someone gives you information like this and there doesn’t seem to be anything else to ask, a good all-purpose reply is to say “Oh, really?” with a downward tone, while nodding or just looking interested. Be careful, though - it’s really important to sound interested when you say “Oh, really?” - otherwise you can sound very rude and sarcastic! | |
| Do you know how to ask someone if they have a husband, wife, boyfriend or girlfriend without being rude? In the next lesson you’ll learn how to ask a more personal question in natural, polite English. See you next time! | |