

British history timeline



King Henry VIII had only one son, Edward (1537 – 1553), with his third wife Jane Seymour, but he was sickly and had a short reign as Edward VI.

The first inhabitants of the British Isles were the Iberians in about 3000 BC and they were followed by the Celtic tribes. It was approximately 43 BC when the Romans invaded the country and stayed there until the 5th century when the Anglo-Saxons from Northern Europe pushed them out.

9th century – Anglo-Saxons

Alfred the Great, a heroic warrior, **captured** London in 886 from the invading Danes, created a new nation and established a **legal code**.

11th century – Norman Conquest

The death of the English king Edward the Confessor brought **unrest** to England. Harold, King of England, defeated his **namesake** Harold, King of Norway at Stamford Bridge in the north of England. Meanwhile, William of Normandy was attacking the south coast of England. Harold rushed south, but was defeated and killed at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. When William the Conqueror became King of England, feudalism and the French language became the **dominant influence**.

13th century – Magna Carta

In 1215, King John signed the Magna Carta, which restricted the power of the ruler and recognized the rights and

privileges of the barons and freemen. The 'Great **Charter**' survived many difficult times and became an essential part of English law. Centuries later it **formed the basis** of the American Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution.

15th century – Wars of the Roses

Two great English **noble houses** wanted the crown: the Lancastrians with their symbol of a red rose and the Yorkists with their white rose. The last battle of the War of the Roses in 1485 ended thirty years of civil war in England at Bosworth Field when Lancastrian Henry Tudor's army defeated the larger force of the Yorkist Richard III. However, by marrying the Yorkist princess Elizabeth, Henry brought the warring families together and brought peace to the country.

16th century – Church of England

The English Reformation began during the reign of the Tudor dynasty, when Henry VIII wanted a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. She had not produced a son, only a daughter, Mary. The Pope said no to this divorce, so Henry founded the Church of England with himself as head in 1534, and divorced Catherine. He did have a child by his second wife Anne Boleyn, another girl, Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth I. Her reign was dominated by a great **flowering** of national culture and the war with Spain. The Spanish Armada was defeated by the English in 1588.

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17th century – Glorious Revolution

After the Civil War (started in 1640) between the king's army and the parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell, the monarchy was restored in 1660 and Charles II succeeded to the throne.

Later, when King James II (brother of Charles II) **was suspected of imposing** the catholic faith on the English, the King was **deposed** and James' son-in-law William of Orange and his wife Mary **became joint sovereigns** after a **bloodless invasion** from Holland in 1688. This event is commonly known as the Glorious Revolution.

18th century – British Empire

Britain and France had been bitter rivals **in the race to conquer** the world. In 1759, British victories in West Africa, the West Indies, and on the battlefields of Europe, India and Quebec established the British Empire 'on which the sun never set.'

19th century – Battle of Trafalgar

France and Spain still troubled the British at sea, but their **fleet** was defeated by Admiral Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Napoleon lost at Waterloo in 1815 and Britain continued her colonial expansion. The Industrial Revolution **fuelled** the continued prosperity of Britain. The Victorian Era from 1837 (named after the reign of Queen Victoria), continued this period of stability and economic growth.

20th century – political stability

After WWII, the country gained its political and financial stability at home as well as abroad. The UK is a founding member of NATO and since 1973 it has been a member of the European Union.

→ Vocabulary

- to capture** ['kæptʃə] - ukořistit
- legal code** ['li:g(ə)l kəʊd] - zákoník
- unrest** [ʌn'rest] - neklid
- namesake** ['neimseik] - jmenovec
- dominant influence** ['dɒmɪnənt 'ɪnfluəns] - hlavní vliv
- charter** ['tʃɑ:tə] - charta, listina
- formed the basis** [fɔ:md 'beɪsɪs] - položila základ
- noble house** ['nəʊb(ə)l] - šlechtický rod
- flowering** - rozkvět
- was suspected of imposing** [sə'spektəd ɪm'pəʊzɪŋ] - byl podezřelý, že chce vnútit
- to depose** [dɪ'pəʊz] - sesadit, svrhnout
- became joint sovereigns** [dʒɔɪnt 'sɒvrɪnz] - začali vládnout spolu
- bloodless invasion** ['blʌdlɪs ɪn'veɪz(ə)n] - nekrvává invaze
- in the race to conquer** [reɪs 'kɒŋkə] - v závodech o dobytí
- fleet** [fli:t] - flotila
- to fuel** [fjuəl] - podpořit