

Key Dates

401-410AD	The Romans withdraw from Britain: Anglo Saxons migrants begin to settle
450AD	Anglo-Saxon invaders arrive in Britain
600AD	Anglo-Saxons gradually take over Britain
633AD	Lindisfarne monastery built
793AD	The Vikings attack and capture the city of York (Jorvik)
867-878AD	Series of Viking victories
871AD	Alfred the Great becomes King of Wessex
886AD	The Vikings and King Alfred divide England
954AD	Eric Bloodaxe, the last King of Jorvik, is thrown out of York
1014 AD	King Canute (Cnut) of Denmark becomes King of England
1042 AD	Edward the Confessor becomes king
1066 AD	King Harold is killed in the Battle of Hastings William I (the Conqueror) crowned King of England
1100 AD	End of the Viking age

**Anglo-Saxons**

After the Romans left Britain, it became more open to invasion.

The Anglo-Saxons were made up of people who rowed across the North Sea from an area that is now Northern Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.



The kings of Anglo-Saxon Britain ruled their own kingdom and the people in it. They also controlled their own army. Kings constantly fought to control other kingdoms and defend their land. When the Anglo-Saxons first settled there were 7 kingdoms. However, by 878AD there was only 1 kingdom left: Wessex, ruled by king Alfred the Great. The other kingdoms had been overrun by the Vikings.

Anglo-Saxon Days of the Week

Monandæg	Day of the Moon
Tiwesdæg	Tiw's day
Wodnesdæg	Woden's day
Dunresdæg	Dunor/Thor's day
Frigedæg	Freia's day (Woden's Wife)
Saeternesdæg	Saturn's day

Key Vocab

AD	Anno Domini - "in the year of our Lord". AD is used to show dates after the birth of Jesus.
Conflict	A disagreement about something important.
Conquer	To get or gain by force : win by fighting.
Archaeology	The study of the buildings, graves, tools and other objects that belonged to people who lived in the past, in order to learn about their culture and society.
Invasion	One country attacking another to take it over.
Settlement	A colony or any small community of people.
Unified	A word that means being together.
Kingdom	A country whose ruler is a king or queen.

Alfred the Great

There were many famous Anglo-Saxon kings, but the most famous of all was **Alfred**, one of the only kings in British history to be called 'Great'.

He fought the Vikings and then made peace so that English and Vikings settled down to live together. He encouraged people to learn and he tried to govern well and fairly.



Alfred made good laws and believed education was important. He had books translated from Latin into English, so people could read them. He also told monks to begin writing the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A famous story tells how, while sheltering in a cowherd's hut, the king got a telling-off from the cowherd's wife. Why? He accidentally let her cakes (or bread) burn on the fire when he forgot to watch them!

The Vikings

The **Viking age** in **European history** was from about AD700 to 1100. During this period many Vikings left Scandinavia and travelled by longboat to other countries, like Britain and Ireland.

When the people of Britain first saw the **Viking longboats** they came down to the shore to welcome them. However, the Vikings fought the local people, stealing from churches and burning buildings to the ground.

The name '**Viking**' comes from a language called '**Old Norse**' and means '**a pirate raid**'. People who went off raiding in ships were said to be 'going Viking'. But not all the Vikings were bloodthirsty warriors.

There were farmers, who kept animals and grew crops, and skillful craft workers, who made beautiful metalwork and wooden carvings. Everyone lived together in a large home called a **longhouse**.

The Vikings also brought with them their way of life and beliefs. The Norse people **worshipped** many gods and loved to tell stories of magic and monsters.



The 'Great' Viking Invasion

In 865AD an army of **Vikings** sailed across the North Sea. This time they wanted to conquer land rather than just raid it.

Over several years the army battled through northern England and in 10 years almost all the **kingdoms** had fallen to the Vikings. All except for Wessex, which was ruled by Alfred the Great.

After years of fighting the Vikings and Alfred made a **peace agreement**. But even after this agreement, fighting went on for many more years. An imaginary dividing line was agreed to run across England, from London in the south towards Chester in the north west. The Anglo-Saxon lands were to the west and the Viking lands, known as the **Danelaw**, were roughly to the east.

Life in the Danelaw

The **Danelaw** covered an area east of their line joining London and Chester. Everything to the east belonged to the Vikings.

Viking families came **to settle** on these lands. Good farmland was scarce in the Vikings' own countries, and they were looking for a better life.

The most important city in the **Danelaw** was the city of York, or '**Jorvik**' (pronounced 'your-vick'), as the Vikings knew it. Over 10,000 people lived there and it was an important place to trade goods.

Many towns and cities in Britain that were founded by the Vikings can still be spotted today. Places that end in -by, -thorpe or -ay were almost certainly **Viking towns**.

Attack on Lindisfarne

In AD793 the Vikings famously attacked a monastery at Lindisfarne in Northumbria, north-east England.

The Vikings were **pagans**, not Christians like most people living in Britain at the time. They did not think twice about raiding a monastery.

Christian monasteries in Britain were easy targets for the Vikings. The monks had no weapons and the buildings were filled with valuable treasures, like gold, jewels and books.

There was food, drink, cattle, clothes and tools too – all very tempting to a Viking raider.

