

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

England is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. It shares land borders with Wales to its west and Scotland to its north. The Irish Sea lies northwest and the Celtic Sea area of the Atlantic Ocean to the southwest. It is separated from continental Europe by the North Sea to the east and the English Channel to the south. The country covers five-eighths of the island of Great Britain, which lies in the North Atlantic, and includes over 100 smaller islands, such as the Isles of Scilly and the Isle of Wight.

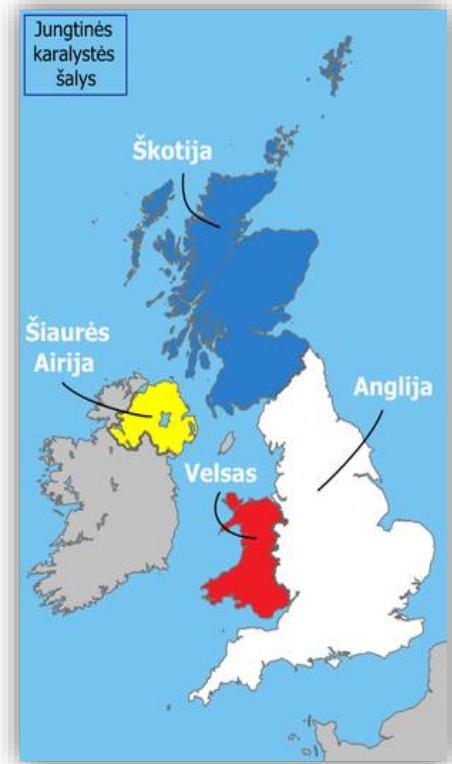
The area now called England was first inhabited by modern humans during the Upper Paleolithic period, but takes its name from the Angles, a Germanic tribe deriving its name from the Anglia peninsula, who settled during the 5th and 6th centuries. England became a unified state in the 10th century and has had a significant cultural and legal impact on the wider world since the Age of Discovery, which began during the 15th century.

Geography

Geographically, England includes the central and southern two-thirds of the island of Great Britain, plus such offshore islands as the Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly. It is bordered by two other countries of the United Kingdom: to the north by Scotland and to the west by Wales. England is closer than any other part of mainland Britain to the European continent. It is separated from France by a 21-mile (34 km) sea gap, though the two countries are connected by the Channel Tunnel near Folkestone. England also has shores on the Irish Sea, North Sea and Atlantic Ocean.

The ports of London, Liverpool, and Newcastle lie on the tidal rivers Thames, Mersey and Tyne respectively. At 220 miles (350 km), the Severn is the longest river flowing through England. It empties into the Bristol Channel and is notable for its Severn Bore (a tidal bore), which can reach 2 metres (6.6 ft) in height. However, the longest river entirely in England is the Thames, which is 215 miles (346 km) in length.

There are many lakes in England; the largest is Windermere, within the aptly named Lake District. Most of England's landscape consists of



low hills and plains, with upland and mountainous terrain in the north and west of the country. The northern uplands include the Pennines, a chain of uplands dividing east and west, the Lake District mountains in Cumbria, and the Cheviot Hills, straddling the border between England and Scotland. The highest point in England, at 978 metres (3,209 ft), is Scafell Pike in the Lake District.

Climate

England has a temperate maritime climate: it is mild with temperatures not much lower than 0 °C (32 °F) in winter and not much higher than 32 °C (90 °F) in summer. The weather is damp relatively frequently and is changeable. The coldest months are January and February, the latter particularly on the English coast, while July is normally the warmest month. Months with mild to warm weather are May, June, September and October. Rainfall is spread fairly evenly throughout the year.

Important influences on the climate of England are its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, its northern latitude and the warming of the sea by the Gulf Stream. Rainfall is higher in the west, and parts of the Lake District receive more rain than anywhere else in the country.

The British landmarks



London Eye, London, England

This giant Ferris wheel that spins above the River Thames offers 360-degree views of the capital and has 32 pods that each represent a London borough.



Big Ben, London, England

Situated near the River Thames, Big Ben stands to the north of Westminster Palace. It is entertaining to catch Big Ben on the hour and waiting to hear his chimes ring out across the city of London. It is nearly 200 years old.



Westminster Abbey, London, England

Westminster Abbey is a UNESCO World Heritage Site where royalty gathers for coronations and weddings. This gothic style church is next to the parliament, and you can visit the inside to see the beautiful stained-glass windows and historical tombs.



Tower of London, London, England

This is a really famous landmark in London, known for being the 900-year-old fortress that protects the crown jewels and previously held infamous prisoners. You see royal artefacts and meet the Yeoman Warders – aka Beefeaters – that used to imprison and execute hundreds of traitors throughout history. You can also see the legendary Ravens that guard the tower.



Tower Bridge, London, England

Tower Bridge is a famous bridge in London with a distinct blue steel structure. This bridge is open to pedestrians at all times. At certain times, the bridge opens to allow tall ships to pass through, and it is exhilarating to see such a historic bridge still working today.



Buckingham Palace, London, England

It is the Royal family's official residence. The surrounding area is stunning – the gardens are landscaped to perfection. The Queen Victoria Memorial is really striking.



Seven Sisters Cliffs, Sussex, England

The Seven Sisters are a collection of chalk cliffs located on the coastline in Sussex. The cliffs lie in Seven Sisters Country Park and cover approximately 280-hectares. The large white cliffs stand out in their surroundings of blue ocean and green clifftops.



Windsor Castle, Windsor, England

Windsor Castle is the oldest and largest occupied castle in the world. The vast grounds are beautiful, and large, open gardens surround the castle.



Stonehenge, Wiltshire, England

Stonehenge is another famous landmark on the UNESCO list. Nobody knows why it was originally built, but it is widely thought that it was for people to gather for religious ceremonies.



Lake District National Park, Cumbria, England

Lake District National Park is the largest national park in England and is home to the highest mountain in the country, Scafell Pike. This region is known for its jaw-dropping views of multiple lakes and rocky mountains scattered throughout the landscape. It is an *Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty* (AONB) in the UK.



The Roman Baths, Bath, England

Do as the Roman's do, and explore the Roman Baths that are the heart of this city. With over 2,000 years of history hidden inside this landmark and around the rest of Bath, the preservation of original features is known to be one of the world's best.



Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon, England

Stratford-upon-Avon, commonly referred to as Stratford, is a country town in the county of Warwickshire. It is most famous for being the birthplace of the renowned playwright William Shakespeare. The River Avon runs through the centre of the town.



Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire, England

Known for its folklore relating to Robin Hood, Sherwood Forest is a National Nature Reserve packed with lots of diverse wildlife. As well as being one of the most beautiful and green nature reserves in Britain, the forest is also dotted with many caves, which makes it so fun to explore.



Cardiff Castle, Cardiff, Wales

Cardiff Castle in the centre of the city. It was built in the late 11th century and has repeatedly been involved in conflicts throughout history.



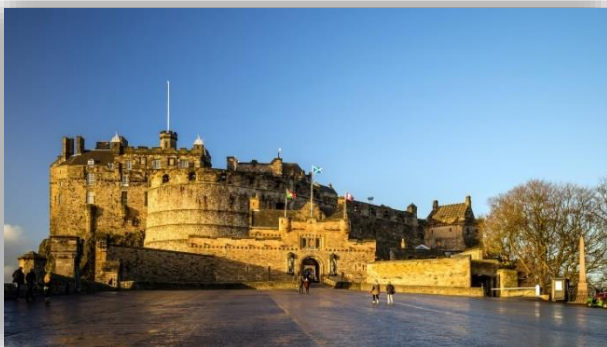
Snowdonia National Park, Gwynedd, Wales

Snowdonia National Park is an area of outstanding beauty that was established in 1951. Many people visit here to climb Mount Snowdon, the second-highest mountain in the UK outside of Scotland.



Conwy Castle, Conwy, Wales

This is a medieval fortress that overlooks the town of Conwy in North Wales. Built by Edward I of England during his time in Wales, the castle sits next to the River Conwy.



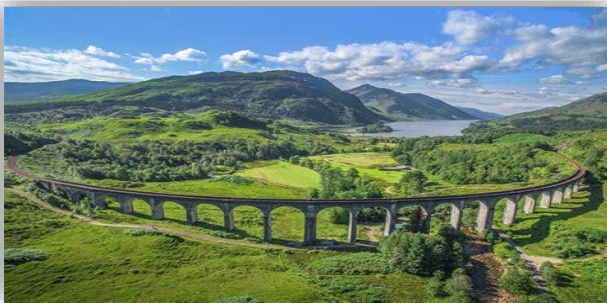
Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh, Scotland

Edinburgh Castle is the glorious beacon of the city. As one of the oldest fortified places in Europe, the castle has a colourful history as a royal residence, fortress and prison.



Loch Ness, Scottish Highlands, Scotland

In an area famed for its Lochs, this is one of the most beautiful in Scotland. Located near Inverness, Loch Ness is nestled in-between rugged scenery and has an air of mystery surrounding it.



Glenfinnan Viaduct, Glenfinnan, Scotland

The Glenfinnan Viaduct is the famous railway bridge that the Hogwarts Express crosses in the films. You can even board a Jacobite steam train yourself, which runs to Fort William in the summer months and gives you access to some incredible views across the Scottish countryside.