

# Castles



## Fun Facts!

A castle is a private fortified residence of a lord or noble, such as a prince. Castles have similarities with other constructions like palaces, fortresses and fortified settlements, but they are not the same. Castles have been built for around 900 years. Earth and timber were originally used to build castles, but now stone is used.

## Features of a Castle

- The main **castle gate** or **door** was hard to break through because it was usually made from thick, iron-studded wood.
- The **portcullis** was the spiked metal or wood barrier, which protected the doors.
- **Moats** surround the castle to make it harder for enemies to tunnel underground into the castle, and enemies could be spotted easily trying to swim or row across.
- **Drawbridges** could be pulled up and stop enemies getting across.
- **Gate towers** were useful for shooting down from.
- The **high ground** that castles were built on meant that the defenders could have a clear view of the surrounding area.
- **Ramparts** were the steep banks of earth or rubble surrounding the castle which made it harder for enemies to climb up.
- The **high walls** of the castle made it difficult for enemies to climb.
- Tall, thick **curtain walls** around the castle shielded the castle from attack.
- The **flanking towers** built in the curtain wall, were where defenders could view and attack enemies from.
- **Battlements** were the tooth shaped top of the castle walls where the defenders could hide behind and fire missiles through the gaps.

## Famous Castles

- Dover Castle
- Kenilworth Castle
- Tintagel Castle
- Bolsover Castle
- Portchester Castle
- Warkworth Castle
- Dunstanburgh Castle
- Carisbrooke Castle
- Middleham Castle
- Beeston Castle



Dover Castle is often considered the most iconic of all English fortresses.

# Questions About Castles



1. What other constructions do castles have similarities with?

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2. How long have castles been around for?

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3. What were castles made from originally and after that?

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4. What was usually made from thick, iron-studded wood and why was it useful?

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5. Why was it good for castles to be built on high ground?

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6. Why were moats useful?

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7. What were the high walls and curtain walls good for?

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8. What use were the battlements?

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9. Name three famous castles.

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# Castles Answers

1. What other constructions do castles have similarities with?  
**Castles have similarities with other constructions like palaces, fortresses and fortified settlements.**
2. How long have castles been around for?  
**Castles have been built for around 900 years.**
3. What were castles made from originally and after that?  
**Earth and timber were originally used to build castles, but now stone is used.**
4. What was usually made from thick, iron-studded wood and why was it useful?  
**The main castle gate or door was usually made from thick, iron-studded wood and was useful because it was hard to break through.**
5. Why was it good for castles to be built on high ground?  
**Castles built on high ground meant the defenders could have a clear view of the surrounding area.**
6. Why were moats useful?  
**Moats surrounded the castle to make it harder for enemies to tunnel underground into the castle and enemies could be spotted easily trying to swim or row across.**
7. What were the high walls and curtain walls good for?  
**The high walls of the castle made it difficult for enemies to climb. Tall, thick curtain walls around the castle shielded the castle from attack.**
8. What use were the battlements?  
**Battlements were the tooth shaped top of the castle walls where the defenders could hide behind and fire missiles through the gaps.**
9. Name three famous castles.  
**Dover Castle, Kenilworth Castle, Tintagel Castle, Bolsover Castle, Portchester Castle, Warkworth Castle, Dunstanburgh Castle, Carisbrooke Castle, Middleham Castle and Beeston Castle are famous castles.**  
**(Accept any three)**