

# Anglo- Saxons



## Who were the Anglo-Saxons?

- The Anglo-Saxons first tried invading in the 4th century, but the Roman army defeated them
- Years later – around 450AD – the Ancient Romans left Britain, the Anglo-Saxons seized their chance
- Romans had left Britain & no-one to defend Britain. Scots (from Ireland) & Picts (over Hadrian's Wall) invaded.
- Angles & Saxons were paid to defend Britain and then refused to go back home.
- They left their homes in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark and sailed over to Britain on wooden boats
- Many of them were farmers before they came to Britain and it's thought they were on the lookout



## Ruling England

- Egbert was the first Anglo-Saxon king to rule England.
- The last Anglo-Saxon king was Harold II in 1066.
- The two most famous Anglo-Saxon kings are Alfred the Great and Canute the Great.
- The Anglo-Saxon period covers about 600 years, and Anglo-Saxon kings ruled England for about 300 years.



The Anglo-Saxons didn't like the stone houses and streets left by the Romans, so they built their own villages.

- They looked for land which had lots of natural resources like food, water and wood to build and heat their homes
- They surrounded each village with a high fence to protect cattle from wild animals like foxes and wolves, and to keep out their enemies, too!
- Their houses were small wooden huts with a straw roof, and inside was just one room in which the whole family lived, ate, slept and socialised together
- The biggest house in the village belonged to the chief, which was large enough to house him and all his warriors – and sometimes even the oxen, too!

### **Anglo-Saxons believed in many Gods.**

Anglo-Saxons were superstitious and believed in lucky charms. They thought that rhymes, potions, stones and jewels would protect them from evil spirits or sickness.

Monks brought 'Christianity' to Anglo-Saxons living in Britain.

### **Key Vocabulary**

Scots	People from Scotland
Picts	a member of an ancient people inhabiting northern Scotland in Roman times
Britons	a Celtic inhabitant of southern Britain before and during Roman times
Angles	a member of a Germanic people, originally inhabitants of what is now Schleswig-Holstein, who came to England in the 5th century ad. The Angles founded kingdoms in Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia and gave their name to England and the English
Saxons	a member of a people that inhabited parts of central and northern Germany from Roman times, many of whom conquered and settled in much of southern England in the 5th–6th centuries
Thane	(in Anglo-Saxon England) a man who held land granted by the king or by a military nobleman, ranking between an ordinary freeman and a hereditary noble
Churl	a peasant
Slave	a person who is the legal property of another and is forced to obey them

monastery	A monastery is a building or complex of buildings comprising the domestic quarters and workplaces of monastics, monks or nuns
monk	a member of a religious community of men typically living under vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience
runes	a letter of an ancient Germanic alphabet, related to the Roman alphabet / small stones, pieces of bone, etc., bearing symbols with mysterious or magic significance, and used in divination
oxen	any domesticated bovine animal kept for milk or meat; a cow or bull
pagan	a person holding religious beliefs other than those of the main world religions
settlement	a place, typically one which has previously been uninhabited, where people establish a community