

Total area: 244,820 sq km
Population: 60.4 million
Capital: London

History

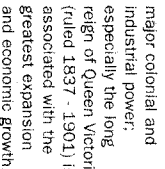
These islands have been **successfully** invaded from Scandinavia and the continent. The Romans had a big influence, but the one date that all children surely know is 1066. This is when William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy (France), **beat** the English King Harold today.

The following centuries were characterised by the growing power of Hastings and invaded Britain. French influence is still seen today particularly in the English language.

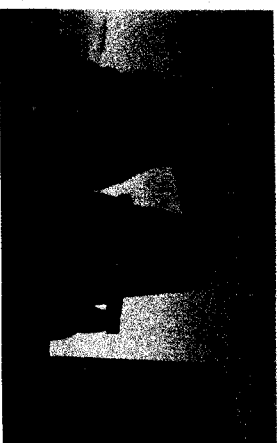
Crowd and disputes with France over French territories. In 1485, a new dynasty, the Tudors, gained the throne. During the reign of Henry VIII the Anglican Church was founded and the reign of his daughter Elizabeth I was marked by overseas expansion as well as great cultural development.

joined to England
the Act of Union

The power of the Parliament gradually grew and during the English Revolution (1649 - 1660) the monarchy was temporarily replaced with a series of republics and



joined to England and
the new unit was
called Great Britain.
Northern Ireland was
merged with Great
Britain in 1801.



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attracts many tourists every year**

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decisions for the UK are made in London through the Parliament, consisting of the **elect**ed House of Commons and the unelected House of Lords. Recently, there has been a process called devolution. This means that Scotland now has its own parliament in Edinburgh and there is a National **Assembly** for Wales in Cardiff. The establishment of an Assembly for Northern Ireland in Belfast **is still under discussion** because of problems with the peace process.

People

The population of the UK is more than 60 million, taking into account emigration and immigration. About 7 million live in London.



rozhodnutí
{ri'spɔnsib(ə)
govorníci

currently [ˈkʌrəntli] - momentálně
elected [ɪˈlektəd] - volený
assembly [əˈsembli] - shromáždění
is still under discussion - je stále přednětem
diskusi
life expectancy [lɪf ˈspektetʃnsɪ] - průměrná délka
životů
unemployment [ˌʌnmplɔɪmənt] - nezaměstnanost

1

Where to go in England?

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There are numerous tourist attractions in all the countries – historical towns and villages, medieval castles and cathedrals, picturesque coasts, mountains and lakes. Here are just some of the most famous places in England. Which ones would you choose if planning your summer holiday?

1 Most tourists start exploring England by visiting the British capital, **London**. It has enough attractions to keep a visitor entertained for several days, or even weeks. Apart from the obvious must-sees, there are also lots of galleries and museums, including the British Museum, where over 7 million objects from human history are exhibited. Lovers of modern architecture can admire buildings by the famous contemporary architect Norman Foster. London also offers many parks to relax in, such as St. James's Park, Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens.

2 York is an ancient city that was very wealthy and powerful under the reign of the Vikings (who called it Jorvik). At the Jorvik Viking Centre you can see reconstructions of Viking York, complete with sounds and smells. The museum is built on the exact spot where the Viking town and houses were uncovered in 1978. A small train takes you through the exhibits, and a museum at the end displays real Viking artefacts. York is also famous for its large Gothic cathedral.

3 Bath was established as a spa town by the ancient Romans in 43 AD, and you can still admire the Roman baths there, built over hot springs (= places where hot water naturally flows from the earth). The city also has some great examples of 18th-century Georgian architecture, and it is connected with the writer Jane Austen, who used to live there.

4 If you are interested in naval history, you should go to **Portsmouth** on the south coast of England. You can visit the Royal Naval Museum there and see a number of famous old ships. There is, for example, HMS Victory, the ship Lord Nelson used in the Battle of Trafalgar, where the British beat the French Napoleonic navy in 1805.

5 **Oxford and Cambridge** are famous university towns, and their universities are among the oldest in the world. Even if you are not a student, you can enjoy the old architecture of the colleges and their special atmosphere. The River Cam in Cambridge is a popular place for punting (= boating in long narrow boats moved by pushing a long pole against the riverbed).

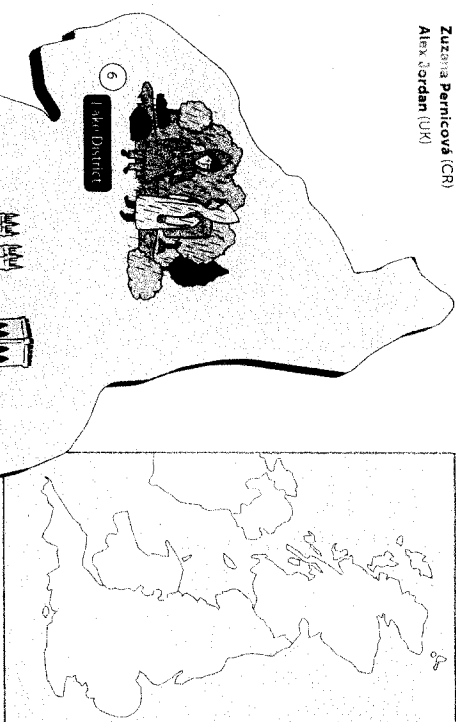
6 If you prefer countryside to cities, you may enjoy the **Lake District**, a region with beautiful scenery, mountains and lakes. Lake Windermere is the largest lake in Britain. The region is also connected with the "Lake Poets", a group of 19th-century romantic poets who lived there and were inspired by the place (William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge...).

7 Nottingham and the nearby Sherwood Forest are well known as the home of the legendary Robin Hood, and you can see an exhibition on the legends at Nottingham Castle. The town also boasts (= has something to be proud of) the oldest pub in England, Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem, thought to date from before 1189.

8 The **Cotswolds** are low hills in central England which were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. They are popular for their picturesque towns and villages with houses built of local limestone (= a white or light grey rock), and also for castles and manor houses (= large country houses) with decorative gardens.

9 **Brighton** is a famous seaside resort south of London. Don't miss the popular Brighton Beach and the exotic-looking Royal Pavilion, a royal palace built in the early 19th century in Indian style, with Chinese decorations inside.

Zuzana Pernicová (CZ)
Alex Jordan (UK)



10 The town of **Canterbury** is known for its medieval cathedral, where the archbishop Thomas Becket was murdered in 1170. It became a destination for Christian pilgrims, and one such pilgrimage was the theme of *The Canterbury Tales*, a famous 14th-century literary work by Geoffrey Chaucer.

11 **Liverpool** draws thousands of music fans every year as it is the place where The Beatles were formed. In the past, it used to be a very important port, and a part of the city centre with the docks is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

12 The main attraction of **Salisbury** is its beautiful medieval cathedral. It was built eight hundred years ago and houses the Magna Carta – the famous document that the British constitution and legal system are based on. Some 15 km from Salisbury is **Stonehenge**, perhaps the best-known prehistoric monument in the world. Built around 2,500 BC, it consists of circles of big standing stones. It may have served as a burial ground and a place of worship (= religious ceremonies). People enjoy gathering there on the summer and winter solstice (= the longest and shortest days of the year) and watching the sunrise.

13 **Stratford-upon-Avon** is the birthplace of one of the greatest playwrights in history, William Shakespeare. You can visit the house where Shakespeare was born and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. But even if you are not into theatre, you can enjoy the old streets with picturesque half-timbered houses from Shakespeare's time (= houses with a wooden frame which shows on the surface).

14 **Cornwall**, a county in the south-west of England, is very popular thanks to its long and beautiful coastline. You can find Land's End there, the most southwesterly point in Britain, and also Tintagel Castle, an impressive castle ruin towering over the sea, which is said to be the birthplace of the legendary King Arthur.