

Upper Key Stage 2

Cool Castles



Sources: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/siteassets/home/members-area/kids/eh_kids_poster.pdf

<https://spartacus-educational.com/NORcastlesG.htm>

<https://kids.britannica.com/students/assembly/view/180996>

<https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/castles>

Castle Challenge!



Castles have been around for hundreds and hundreds of years. Some castles are ruins with only small parts of them left standing. Some castles have people living in them today or are open to the public so we can learn more about their history.

Have a go at the castle challenges below. If you like to add extra challenge, set yourself a time-limit for each one.



2 Minute Challenge

Make a list of ALL the films, books and games you know that have a castle in them



5 Minute Challenge

Make a list of the names of any castles you know



10 Minute Challenge

Look at the castle picture in your pack. What do you notice?

- How many things on the picture can you label?
- What period of time in history does this picture represent? How do you know?
- Where has the castle been built?
- What do you notice about the landscape?
- Why do you think the castle was built there?
- What are the different stalls selling in the market place? What trades (jobs) do you think the stall holders (people selling things) do?

Castle Talk



Look at the glossary below

(source: <https://spartacus-educational.com/NORcastlesG.htm>).

How many of these words can you use to add labels to the Castle Poster?
Put a tick next to any you can find.

Castles Glossary

Bailey: A castle courtyard.

Barbican: A stone building protecting the gateway or entrance of a castle.

Battlements: A parapet with indentations and raised portions (merlons). Battlements are sometimes called crenellations.

Buttress: Projection from the wall that provides extra support for the building.

Constable: Official in charge of a castle when the owner is absent.

Curtain: Connecting wall between towers of a castle.

Drawbridge: A movable bridge. Drawbridges usually moved horizontally (across rather than up).

Drum-Tower: A large circular tower that was usually low and squat.

Fosse: A ditch surrounding a castle.

Garderobe: A castle toilet. The garderobe was often a projection from the wall over the moat.

Gatehouse: A building protecting the entrance to a castle.

Great Hall: The main room in the building where the castle owner and his family lived.

Keep: Main stone tower of a castle. This large tower was also known as a donjon.

Lancet: Long, narrow window with pointed head.

Loop: Narrow opening in castle wall that was used by archers to fire on attacking soldiers.

Machicolations: Projecting stonework on the outside of castle towers or walls, with holes in floor for dropping missiles on people attacking the castle.

Moat: A deep wide trench round a castle.

Motte: A mound of rammed layers of soil. Some mottes were only about 5 metres (16 feet) high, but some were over 18 metres (60 feet). The Normans built wooden watchtowers on the top of their mottes.

Murder-Holes: Holes (also called meurtrieres) in the roof or ceiling of a castle. Cold water could be poured through the holes to put out fires. These holes were also used for pouring scalding water, hot oil or other substances on soldiers who had managed to enter the castle.

Palisade: A strong timber fence built on top of an earth rampart.

Parapet: A low wall on the outer side of the main wall.

Portcullis: Grating made of metal and wood. The portcullis was dropped vertically from grooves to block passage through the gate of the castle.

Rampart: A defensive stone or earth wall surrounding a castle.

Shell-Keep: A wall surrounding the inner portion of the castle.

Solar: The upper living room of castle. The solar was usually situated above the hall and was used mainly as a bedroom.

Tower: A high building. Towers in castles were either square, many sided (polygonal), or round.

Turret: A small tower. A turret on top of the main tower was often the main observation point in a castle.

Wall-Walk: A passage along the castle wall

Something to think about ...

Many of these words are from the French language. Why do you think that is?



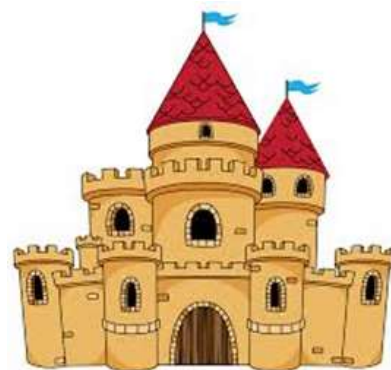
Read for a Purpose

As you are reading the following information, think about these three things:

- Why were castles built?
- What were different parts of the castle for?
- What jobs were there to do linked with castles?

Reading Challenge:

- What were the main ways of defending castles?
- What methods did enemies use to destroy castles?



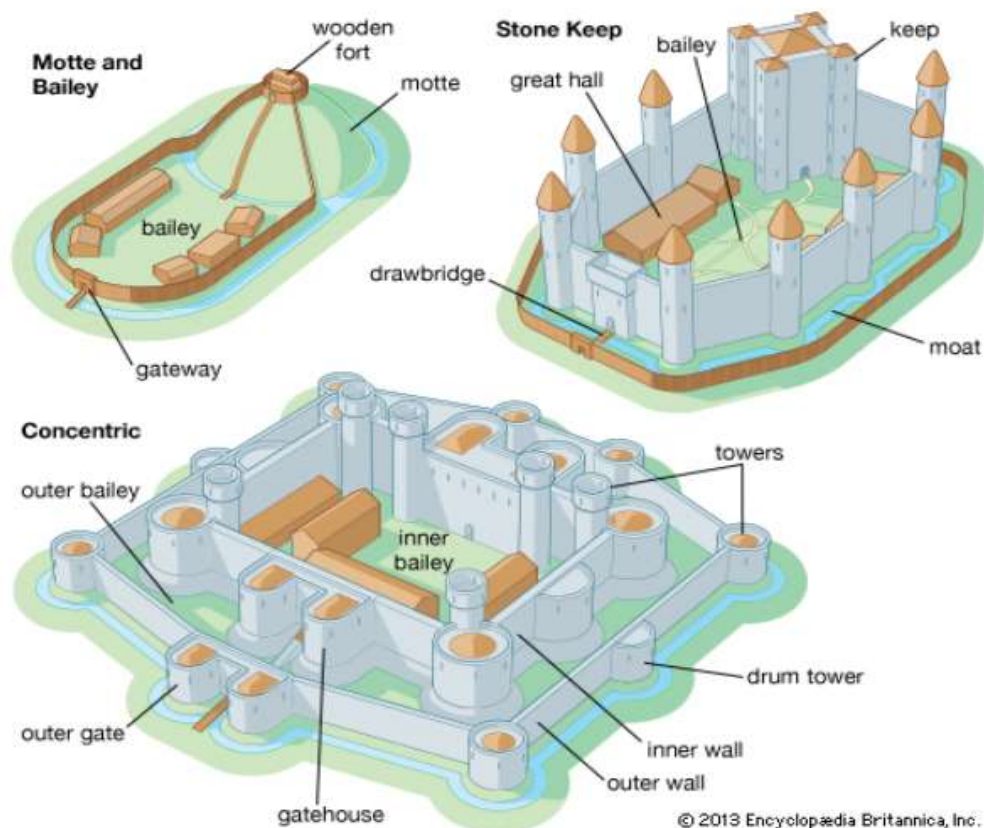
All about Castles

(Source: <https://kids.britannica.com/students/assembly/view/180996>;
<https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/castles>)

A medieval castle was the fortified home of an important person, such as a lord or king. The medieval period, also called the Middle Ages, lasted from the 5th century CE to the end of the 15th century. During this time, many castles were built in Europe and the Middle East. They ranged from simple wooden enclosures to vast stone palaces. A castle allowed a lord to control the surrounding land. It also kept his family and riches safe while he was away at war fighting as a knight for the king. Forts were not the same as castles. While soldiers might sleep in them, forts were never used as private homes.

The first castles in England were built by William the Conqueror and the Normans when they invaded in England in 1066. They needed a quick, easy and sure way to defend all the land they'd just won, and castles helped them to do this. Different types of castles developed over the centuries that got stronger and easier to defend. At the same time, different weapons were designed to try to break into the castles and overtake them more quickly. There are many castles all over Britain that you can walk around to see exactly what it would have been like to live there, whether you were trying to defend the castle or trying to attack it.

Three Main Types of Castle



The three main types of castles are the motte and bailey castle, the stone keep castle, and the concentric castle.

Castle Timeline

(Source: <https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/castles>)



- 1066
- The Normans invaded England and won the Battle of Hastings, making William the Conqueror the next king



- 1067
- Chepstow Castle started to be built



- 1070-79
- Windsor Castle and the White Tower at the Tower of London were built



- 1100
- Castles started to be built using stone



- 1216
- The trebuchet was first used in England at the siege of Dover Castle



- 1272-1307
- Edward I was king of England, and started having concentric castles built



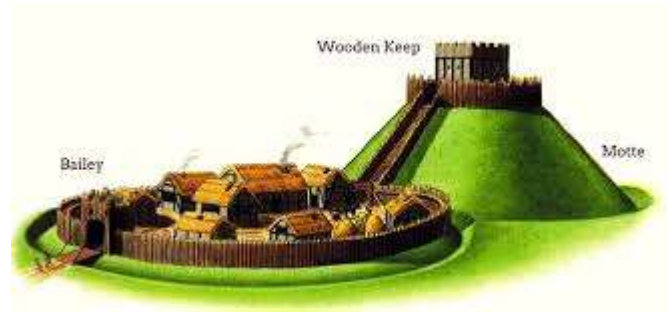
- 1642-51
- The English Civil War took place, and many castles were used by the royalists (supporters of King Charles) to defend themselves against the roundheads (supporters of Parliament). Castles captured by the roundheads were partly destroyed (called 'slighting') so they couldn't be used again, and some castles were never repaired



- 1930
- The construction of Castle Drogo, the last castle to be built in England, ended

The castles the Normans built were called motte and bailey. Windsor Castle was originally built like this.

Mottes were large hills that were made by piling dirt into a high mound. A home was built on top for the lord (who was in charge of the castle) to live in with his family. This was called the keep, and a fence was built around it for extra protection. Because the keep was built so high, he could see far into the distance and was able to tell if enemies were coming.



At the base of the motte was the bailey, which was like a little village – people who worked for the lord lived there, including tradespeople like blacksmiths. A high fence was also built around the bailey.

The motte and bailey were protected by a deep ditch full of water all the way around it called a moat. You could only get into the bailey by crossing over the moat, so they built a bridge that could be lowered and raised depending on whether friends or enemies were trying to get in. This was called a drawbridge.

Motte and bailey castles were first built with wood, and then replaced with stone keeps and walls because stone is a stronger material. It doesn't burn like wood does, and it is more difficult to knock down a stone wall than a wooden wall.

Many people lived at the castle, not just kings and nobles. Castles also had constables who looked after all the things that needed to be done to keep the castle running smoothly, like cooking all the meals, caring for the horses and cleaning up after everyone. The constable was like a manager and he was in charge of the castle when the lord was away.

One of the worst jobs at the castle was to be a gong farmer. Toilets, called garderobes, were built along the inside of the castle walls – everything just dropped down into the castle moat or into ditches called cesspits. Gong farmers had to clean out the cesspits.

Dungeons were in the basements of castles, where prisoners were kept.

When you look at a castle, you'll see tiny windows that look like slits. These "arrow loops" were made so archers could fire arrows through them to defend the castle. They are narrow so that it was hard for the attacking archers to fire arrows back through them.

Life at the castle wasn't all about fighting battles. The lords and ladies held banquets in the Great Hall of the castle, and invited jesters and singers to perform for everyone.

Castles weren't very comfortable places to live. They could be very damp and cold, especially in the winter.

Reading Challenge – Extra Information

Building Castles

Castles took a lot of planning to build. Special stones would be cut from quarries and shaped for certain parts of the castle. The stones were put together using mortar as a kind of glue. Mortar was made from water, sand and lime, and was smeared in layers and cracks between stones – when the mortar dried, the stones would be kept firmly in place.

Castle walls weren't just a single layer of stone blocks – they had two outer layers of stone blocks with an inner filling of smaller stones and mortar. The outer layers could be plastered over to give a nicer looking finish.

At first, all towers were square, with corners. Later people realised that round towers were actually harder for weapons like trebuchets to destroy – the impact didn't have as much of an effect on a circle as it did on a square.



trebuchet

Even though castles were homes, their main purpose was to defend. After William the Conqueror and the Normans invaded England, they immediately set to work building motte and bailey castles – these gave everyone who lived inside a good way to defend themselves against enemy attackers, and they were built close enough together so people in one castle could warn people in another one quickly if they saw the enemy coming. Mottes (hills) gave the castle lord a way to see far off into the distance from the security of his keep, so he could see exactly what the enemy was up to without having to leave the safety of the castle.

Over the next few centuries after the Normans, castle designs developed and became better and better at defending their inhabitants. New features were added such as round towers, layers of walls, and lots of places for soldiers to hide and surprise the enemy when they attacked.

Castles began to be less secure with the development of cannons powerful enough to damage castle walls in the 15th century. When an enemy could destroy the castle walls by continually firing cannons at them, they could no longer protect their inhabitants. Most castle building had stopped by the 16th century. Many castles fell into disuse and became ruins.



When an enemy army set up to attack a castle, this was called a **siege** – they'd use different offensive tactics to try to break down the castles defences and, because the people in the castle couldn't really go anywhere, the enemy army could take as long as they wanted. Sometimes, they'd make life hard for the people inside the castle just by being there and not letting them go outside to get food and supplies; if the castle residents weren't prepared, they could even starve.

These are some of the features that helped defend castles against enemy attacks:

- **Very high walls** with walkways along the top for soldiers to sit along, using battlements to fire weapons from and hide behind to protect themselves
- **Towers** along the walls (first all built square, then round) that soldiers could use to store spare weapons in and protect themselves if the enemy started coming in along the wall in siege towers. The towers stuck out from the castle walls so that archers could see anyone who got too close to the walls and shoot them.
- **Holes in ceilings or in between layers of walls** that soldiers could pour hot oil or tar through if the enemy tried to come in
- **Archer loops**, which were narrow slits in the tower and along the wall that were just big enough for archers to shoot arrows from
- A **deep moat** of water around the castle, which meant the enemy had to swim in order to reach the castle walls; it also meant they couldn't just tunnel under the wall
- A strong **gatehouse** at the castle entrance, with more towers for soldiers to use and a drawbridge that could be lifted so the enemy couldn't come in.
- A **portcullis** that could be lowered in front of the castle doors to make it harder for the enemy to ram through.



To try to take over a castle, the enemy would use some of these tactics and weapons:

- Trebuchet and catapults that could be used to fire rocks, hot tar and fireballs at or over the castle walls
- A battering ram on wheels that could be shoved back and forth against the castle door to try to break it down
- Climbing over the castle walls by propping long ladders up against the sides
- Tunnelling under the castle wall, catching the soldiers by surprise
- Rolling a siege tower up to the castle wall, offering an easy way to jump out onto the wall without having to climb up the side or tunnel underneath

Castle Conclusions 1

Write these headings in your books and find as much information as you can for each one. There is an example given for each one.

Why were castles built?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To provide a fortified home for important people
What jobs were there to do linked with castles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The lord was in charge of the castle
Reading Challenge	
How were castles defended?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
How were castles overcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

- Which job would you most like in the castle and why?
- Which job would you least like in the castle and why?
- Which facts about castles were new to you?
- What was the most surprising fact?



Reading Challenge:

- Which method do you think was the most effective way to defend a castle and why?
- With method do you think was the most effective way to defeat a castle and why?

Castle Conclusions 2

Draw a diagram of a motte and bailey castle (or use the Castle Poster 2 in the pack) and label all the different parts and complete the table below (draw the headings in your books). An example has been done for you. Use the glossary, the diagrams and the text to help you. You could even add information you have researched for yourself.

Name of Part	Information about the part
keep	The keep was where the lord lived with his family. It was the main stone tower of the castle and was often surrounded with a fence or wall for extra protection. As it was built so high, the lord could see for miles around and was able to tell if enemies were coming.

Castle Conclusions 3

Go back to the diagram showing three different types of castle (motte and bailey, stone keep and concentric).

Which type of castle would you most have liked to live in and why?



Castle Composition Challenge

An **expanded noun phrase** adds more detail to the noun by adding one or more adjectives, or descriptive phrases, to the noun. Remember, an adjective is a word that describes a noun.




For example: a **stone castle** – one adjective has been added for extra detail

an **imposing stone** castle – two adjectives have been added for even more detail

an **imposing stone castle with a well-fortified keep** – in addition to the two adjectives, extra information has been added for further description.

NB. Commas are **not** used to separate adjectives in a noun phrase.

See how many castles you can collect by turning these nouns into noun phrases. An example has been done for you.

			
Noun	Noun with one adjective	Noun with two adjectives	Noun with adjectives and an extra descriptive phrase
bailey	the busy bailey	the busy noisy bailey	the busy noisy bailey full of market stalls
moat			
portcullis			
motte			
barbican			
rampart			

Castle Composition 2

Pick one, or more of the writing activities from the table below. Don't forget to use some **expanded noun phrases in your writing** – *when it is appropriate to do so*.

<p style="text-align: center;">Letter Home Life in the Castle</p> <p>Imagine you are someone who lives and works within the castle walls. You are writing a letter to your parents who live far away from the castle. In your letter, describe what it is like to live in the castle; what job you do; other people you have met; how you are finding life in the castle.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Diary Extract of a Film-maker's Researcher</p> <p>Imagine you are the researcher for a film-maker looking for a setting for a film (eg. Hogwarts in Harry Potter). You are very excited because you have found the perfect castle. Write your diary extract for the day. Don't forget to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of setting the film required and why • A description of what you saw in the castle you found • How you felt as you were looking round the castle • How you knew this was the perfect castle for the film 	<p style="text-align: center;">Castle Guide</p> <p>Imagine you work in a castle that has become a museum. You have to produce a written guide to the different parts of the castle. This will be given out to children visiting the castle with their school. Write the guide. You could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What they will be able to see • A map to help them find their way around • Diagrams of some of the different parts of the castles with explanations • Some fascinating facts
<p style="text-align: center;">Super Senses</p> <p>Writers and poets often include sensory description in their writing. In other words, they describe what they can see, hear, touch, smell and taste. Imagine what life in a castle would have been like, write a sensory description. You might find it helpful to generate some ideas under each sense first. You could use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noun phrases • Powerful verbs • Adverbials • Similes • Metaphors • Alliteration • Onomatopoeia 	<p style="text-align: center;">Castle Story</p> <p>Lots of stories and films are set in castles. Now you can write your own. Remember that you will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the scene • Introduce key characters • Decide on a problem that will happen in the story • Build up to the problem • Think about how the problem is resolved • End the story appropriately – what has changed since the beginning? 	<p style="text-align: center;">Castle for Sale</p> <p>The Lord wishes to move and sell his castle. He has instructed you, a medieval estate agent, to list the castle for sale.</p> <p>It is your job to write for a 'For Sale' brochure. Include creative and colourful descriptions of the castle with a persuasive tone to really sell it. E.g. <i>This gracious castle with far reaching views has 12 spacious bedrooms and is situated in a sought after location..</i> Describe the special features found there. E.g. <i>Spacious and airy rooms retaining many original features, with open views over the Welsh countryside.</i> What are the castle's key selling points? Location, condition, views, original features, open plan kitchen, price, extensive gardens etc.</p> <p>You could include 'photographs' of some of the best bits.</p> <p>(source: https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/140804KS2literacyen.pdf)</p>