

# Year 7 Medieval history knowledge organiser

Medieval	The period between 1066-1500
Chronology	Putting events in the order that they happened
Century	100 years
Anglo-Saxons	People that lived in England before the Norman Conquest
Normans	People from the Normandy region of France, led by King William
Bayeux Tapestry	An embroidery telling the story of the Norman Conquest
Conquest	Taking an area by using force
Fyrd	Local farmers that fight for Harold Godwinson's army
Housecarls	Paid, experienced soldiers that fought for Harold's army
Cavalry	William's soldiers that fought on horses
Harrying	To completely destroy
Pope	Head of the Catholic Church

## Britain before 1066

**Anglo-Saxons:** People who lived in Britain from the 5th century. They included people from Germanic tribes who migrated to the island from Europe.

**Heir:** a person who is legally allowed to take the rank and property of someone who has died.

**Witan:** Kings Council, made up of powerful Bishops and Earls, helped the king run the country

### **Edward the Confessor: 1042-1066**

- Edward became king of England in 1042 after his half-brother died. Before this he had been living in Normandy.
- Edward married but had no children. It was not clear who Edward wanted to be king after him. **For a king to die without an heir was a disaster!**
- He was made a saint and 'the confessor' means someone that is saint-like but not a martyr.

## Potential heirs to the English throne in 1066: Who should become king?

### Harald Hardrada

Viking King of Norway  
Vikings had ruled Britain before. Most feared warrior in Europe -Hardrada means 'hard ruler' and his nickname was 'the Ruthless'. Harald was supported by Tostig, Harold Godwinson's brother who wanted revenge.

### Harold Godwinson

Anglo-Saxon. Earl of Wessex, one of the most powerful men in England  
Harold's sister was married to King Edward. Harold was a brave and respected soldier with a tough streak.  
The Witan, wanted Harold to be the next king.

### William of Normandy

Duke of Normandy, France. William came from a fighting family. He was a brave soldier. Edward's cousin. Edward had lived in Normandy from 1016-1042. Edward had supposedly promised that William should become King of England

## Armies at the Battle of Hastings

William's army	Harold's army
His soldiers were well trained and well equipped. They wore chain mail armour which gave them much protection. His army was made up of infantry, archers and cavalry. His cavalry rode specially bred horses which could carry the weight of these horse soldiers and still ride at speed. They were the elite of William's army.	Harold's army was made up of professional soldiers and conscripts, peasant farmers who were forced to join the army and fight. Harold's best professional soldiers were the Saxon Huscarls. They were the king's elite bodyguard. They fought with large axes and round shields.

## Why did William win the battle of Hastings?

### Preparations

William had well trained and professional soldiers. Large parts of Harold's army was untrained and made up of farmers. Many of Harold's men had left the army to collect the harvest in. Harold was not prepared for the battle. William's army was fresh and well rested. He had lots of supplies. Harold's was tired and reduced in size following the Battle of Stamford Bridge.

### Luck

The weather changed when William was trying to fight the Vikings first this gave William the advantage. The Saxons left the shield wall to chase the Normans down the hill. At a key moment in the battle Harold was killed.

### Leadership

William was very brave and led his men very well. William showed his face during the battle to keep his soldiers from running away.



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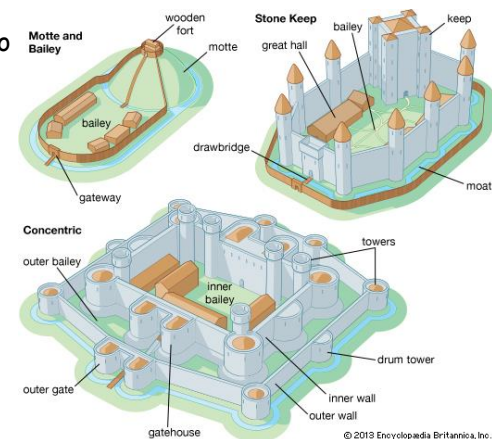
Medieval	The period between 1066-1500
Feudal system	The social structure of Medieval England
Villein	Peasant at the bottom of the Feudal system
Baron	Noble land owner that pledged their loyalty to the King
Normans	People from the Normandy region of France, led by King William
Motte and Bailey	The first type of castle made by William. It was made out of wood and had a higher Motte part and a lower Bailey part
Stone Keep castle	Similar to Motte and Bailey but made of stronger materials such as stone
Taxes	Money collected from people by the King
Pope	Head of the Catholic Church

## Castles

William also kept control by building castles throughout England. Over time 3 types of castles developed throughout Britain.

**Motte and Bailey** - The first castles built to fight against rebellions. They were built quickly and made out of wood, meaning that they were not very strong, and could be easily destroyed. The Bailey was on flat land, where majority of the people lived. The Motte was the higher land of the castle, where the fort was.

**Stone Keep** - This castle was now made out of stone and had towers as a form of defence. The main part of the castle was the Keep, a large square tower, used as the main defence.



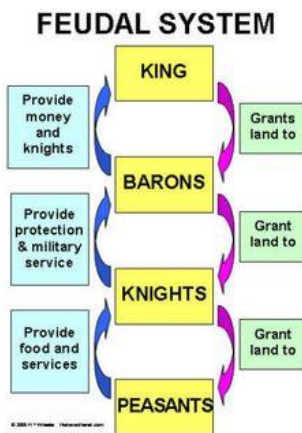
## The Feudal System

After taking the throne in 1066, William has a few problems:

- He does not trust the English lords, who do not like him.
- He has to force the English to accept him as King.
- Many of the English are rebelling and fighting against William.
- He has to pay the French Knights who helped him to win the throne.

**Solution:** William crushes the rebellions and took the land away from the English lords and gave it to his supporters instead. William now has his supporters helping him to control the whole country.

William also sets up the **Feudal System**. This forces the English to give William their taxes and promises of loyalty, in return for protection and land to farm. William is at the top of the system, as he holds all the land and money, which he gives to the Barons. They promise William their money, soldiers and loyalty. They give the land to the Knights in return for loyalty and military service. Finally the knights give the land to the peasants. The peasants farm the land and give food, money and services to the knights.



## The Domesday Book

In 1086, William sent out surveyors to every part of England, with orders to list:

- how much land was there
- who had owned it in 1066, and who owned it now
- what was the place like, and who lived there
- how much it was worth in 1066 and how much now

William did this to allow him to effectively tax the land and earn money. William also needed to have an idea of what could be seized from landowners who did not show him loyalty.

## Additional notes