

The Monarchs of England, Great Britain, the British Empire and the United Kingdom

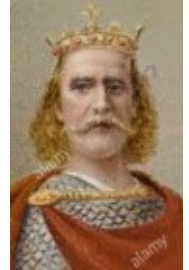


1. The Anglo-Saxons (German) (around 616 years)

The Anglo-Saxons invaded Great Britain around the year 450, and remained the rulers until 1066. They are the direct ancestors of most modern British people. Anglo-Saxon culture forms the basis of the modern English legal system and of many aspects of English society. Around 30% of the modern English language comes from the language of the Anglo-Saxons.

During the Anglo-Saxons rule, the country was divided into seven kingdoms, and were only unified into one kingdom, **The Kingdom of England**, in the 9th century. Between 827 and 1066, there were a total of 20 Anglo-Saxon kings who ruled over all England. The word "England" comes from "Land of the Angles".

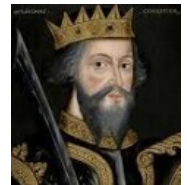
King Harold II (*last Anglo-Saxon king of England*) January 1066 – October 1066
Harold Godwinson was the last crowned Anglo-Saxon king of England. He was killed at the Battle of Hastings, fighting the Norman invaders, who were led by William the Conqueror. His death marked the end of Anglo-Saxon rule over England.



2. The House of Normandy (French) (88 years)

Around 30% of the modern English language comes from the language of the Normans.

King William I, William the Conqueror 1066 - 1087
Invaded England from Normandy. Defeated King Harold II at the Battle of Hastings. When William died, his lands were divided between his oldest two sons. Robert inherited Normandy, while William became king of England.



King William II, William the Red 1087 - 1100
Son of William I. He was called William the Red, because of his red hair. He was accidentally killed in the New Forest by an arrow while he was hunting.

King Henry I 1100 - 1135

The fourth and youngest son of William I. Henry's two sons drowned, so his daughter, Matilda, was made his successor. However, the king's council considered a woman unfit to rule, so they offered the throne to Stephen, a grandson of William I, and nephew of Matilda. Matilda then went to live in Italy.



King Stephen 1135 - 1154

Grandson of William I. In 1139, Matilda returned to England to take the kingdom by force, supported by her half-brother and her uncle, King David I of Scotland. Matilda's forces captured Stephen at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141, but her attempt to be crowned was opposed by the London population. She was never declared Queen of England, but was given the title "**Empress Matilda**". Matilda then went to live in Normandy, where her husband ruled, in 1148, leaving her oldest son, Henry, to continue the campaign in England. He eventually became king in 1154.



3. The House of Plantagenet (French) (245 years)

The Plantagenet family was enormous and powerful, and was spread across many parts of Europe.

King Henry II 1154 - 1189

Son of Matilda and grandson of Henry I. He became king when he was only 21. He ruled for thirty-four years, but spent only fourteen years in England. He controlled more of France than the King of France. Henry's oldest son, also called Henry, died before him, so in 1189 his second son, Richard, succeeded to the throne.



King Richard I (Richard the Lionheart) 1189 - 1199

Second son of Henry II. He was in England for only ten months, spending most of his time fighting in the Crusades (nine religious wars, from 1095 to 1291, to liberate the Holy Land from Islamic rule - they didn't succeed!). Richard spoke very little English. He was considered a brave, warrior king, and was given the nickname 'Lionheart'. He had no children, so after he died in battle, the next king was his younger brother John.

King John I 1199 - 1216

Third son of Henry II and brother of Richard I. He was responsible for the creation of the "Magna Carta", the origin of the modern British justice system.



King Henry III 1216 - 1272

Oldest son of John I. Henry was 9 years old when he became king. His reign lasted for 56 years, making him the longest serving English monarch.

King Edward I 1272 - 1307

Oldest son of Henry III. Edward fought wars against the Scottish King, Robert the Bruce. Edward created the first parliament in 1295, bringing together knights, clergy and nobility together for the first time.



King Edward II 1307 - 1327

Son of Edward I. He was born in Wales. His wife, Isabella of France, moved to France when their marriage deteriorated and she later built an army in France and attacked England. She eventually took over the Kingdom. Edward II was imprisoned and was later murdered in jail. His son succeeded him.



King Edward III 1327 - 1377

Son of Edward II and Isabella of France. Edward became King when he was 14. He fought many battles against the Scots and the French. Bubonic plague killed half of the population of England during his reign.



Richard II 1377 - 1399

The oldest son of Edward III died before him, so his grandson, Richard, became the next king.

4. The House of Lancaster (English) (62 years)

King Henry IV 1399 - 1413

Henry was another grandson of Edward III. He murdered his cousin, Richard II, to become king. This started a dispute between two families, the House of Lancaster and the House of York (the War of the Roses). He was the first monarch since the Norman Conquest to speak to the people in English. He died of leprosy in 1413.



King Henry V 1413 - 1422

Son of Henry IV. He was the first English king who could read and write in English. Henry was 14 years old when he fought his first battle. He fought the French in the Battle of Agincourt and won. He died from dysentery at 35.

King Henry VI 1422 - 1461

Henry became king of England when he was only 9 months old. He was also crowned King of France in 1431. He was murdered in the Tower of London when he was 40 years old.



5. The House of York (English) (24 years)

King Edward IV 1461 - 1483

Edward came to the throne in 1461 after defeating Henry VI at the Battle of Towton. He was just 19 years old. He tried to bring peace to the country.



King Edward V April 1483 – June 1483

Oldest son of Edward IV. He reigned for only two months. He and his brother Richard were murdered in the Tower of London. He was only about 12 years old when he died.



King Richard III 1483 – 1485

Younger brother of Edward IV and prime suspect in the murders of the two boys, Edward and Richard. He was killed in a battle against Henry Tudor. He was the last English King to die on the battlefield.

6. The House of Tudor (Welsh) (118 years)

King Henry VII (Henry Tudor) 1485 - 1509

Henry became king when he defeated and killed Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. The battle ended the War of the Roses, a long dispute between the House of Lancaster and the House of York. He kept England peaceful and brought many riches to the country.



King Henry VIII 1509 - 1547

Second son of Henry VII. Henry succeeded to the throne because his older brother Arthur had died in 1502. His first wife, Catherine of Aragon, had been Arthur's wife. The best known fact about Henry VIII is that he had six wives. He argued a lot with the Pope and made himself the head of the new 'Church of England', so that he could marry more than once. The fates of his wives were: 1) divorced, 2) beheaded, 3) died, 4) divorced, 5) beheaded, 6) survived. Henry, of Welsh heritage, incorporated Wales into the "Kingdom of England" (which also included Ireland).



King Edward VI 1547 - 1553

Son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour. He became king when he was only 9 years old and was never a healthy king. He died when he was 15 years old.

Lady Jane Grey 10th July 1553 – 19th July 1553.

Although never officially crowned, Lady Jane Grey was "de facto" queen for only 9 days. After Edward's death there was a dispute over the succession. Since Mary (Henry's oldest child) was catholic, Jane Grey, another daughter, was named as the next monarch. However, Mary and her supporters removed Jane from power and imprisoned her. She was executed in 1554, aged 17.



Queen Mary I (Bloody Mary) 1553 - 1558

Daughter of Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon. She married Philip II of Spain. She wanted to make England catholic again, and killed many people who opposed her. She is remembered as a violent monarch. There is a cocktail named after her.

Queen Elizabeth I 1558 - 1603

Daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. During her reign, great adventurers discovered many new lands. She defeated the Spanish Armada. Since Elizabeth never married or had children (she was called the "Virgin Queen"), she named James VI of Scotland as her heir, uniting the two countries Scotland and England. Elizabeth I was the last monarch of *England*. From this time, monarchs ruled over *Great Britain*.



7. The House of Stuart (Scottish) (111 years)

James I 1603 - 1625

When James became King of England, he was already a king - King James VI of Scotland. He was the first monarch to rule both countries and the first to call himself 'King of Great Britain'. James was the son of Mary, Queen of Scots. He had been King of Scotland for 29 years when he became king of England. James married Anne of Denmark. In 1605 a group of rebellious Catholics tried to assassinate the King, because they wanted a Catholic king. This event is commemorated every year on November 5th (Guy Fawkes night).



Charles I 1625 - 1649

Second son of James I. He became king because his older brother, Henry, died of typhoid at the age of 18. In 1642, parliament significantly reduced the king's rights, so Charles attacked the Palace of Westminster using hundreds of soldiers, and arrested five MPs and accused them of treason. The population of London was horrified and the king was forced to escape the city. A civil war broke out between the Roundheads (supporters of parliament) and the Cavaliers (supporters of the King). After the war, Charles I was executed, and his son, also Charles, was exiled.

The English monarchy was then replaced with a "Commonwealth of England" (1649–1653) and then a "Protectorate" (1653–1660), under the rule of Oliver Cromwell, the "Lord Protector". Great Britain was therefore a republic for 11 years. Cromwell did not want to be king and refused the crown when it was offered to him in 1653.

Charles II 1660 - 1685

Son of Charles I. He was crowned King of Scotland in 1651. When Richard Cromwell (son of Oliver Cromwell) lost the confidence of Parliament and abdicated, Charles returned to London to rule Great Britain (Scotland, England and Wales). He was 30 years old. During his reign, the country suffered from the Black Plague (1665) and the Great Fire of London (1666).



James II 1685 - 1688

Younger brother of Charles II. James was 15 when his father (Charles I) was executed. He escaped to France in 1648, disguised as a girl. While king, James tried to force people to follow his Roman Catholic faith. He was very unpopular because of his persecution of the Protestants, and he was hated by the people. He was forced to abdicate in 1688.

Queen Mary II 1688 - 1694 and William III 1688 - 1702

Mary, daughter of James II, became Queen and Parliament invited her Dutch husband, William (William of Orange) to be King, and to rule together with his wife. When Mary died in 1694, William remained the only ruler. He died in 1702.



Queen Anne 1702 - 1714

Sister of Mary II, the second daughter of James II. Married George of Denmark. All of her 17 children died. An act of Parliament in 1707 formally united Scotland and England (which included Wales), forming "The Kingdom of Great Britain".

Anne was the last Stuart monarch, because she died without leaving an heir. After her death, succession went to the nearest protestant relative of the Stuart family. This was Sophia of Hanover, daughter of Elizabeth of Bohemia, James I's only daughter. However, it was her son, George of Hanover, who succeeded to the throne (the great grandson of James I).

8. The House of Hanover (German) (187 years)



King George I 1714 - 1727

Great-grandson of James I. He was the first German king of England, as well as the King of Hanover. He made very little effort to learn the language and customs of the country, and he communicated with his ministers in French. He spent much of his time in Hanover. In 1721, Sir Robert Walpole became England's first Prime Minister.

King George II 1727 - 1760

Son of George I. Like his father, he was the King of Hanover, Germany, and he preferred Germany to England, but he learned to speak English, unlike his father. He was the last English King to fight in battle, against the French, at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743.



King George III 1760 - 1820



George III was the first Hanover monarch to be born in England. He was the son of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, and grandson of George II. George III ruled for 60 years and had 15 children. During his reign, Australia was colonised. The American Colonies proclaimed their independence on 4th July 1776. In 1801, The "Kingdom of Great Britain" became "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland". The wars with France continued until Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815.

King George IV 1820 - 1830

Oldest son of George III. George was the first king of "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland" and also the "King of Hanover". Because of his charm and culture, he was called "the first gentleman of England". His only legitimate child, Princess Charlotte, died before him in 1817, so he was succeeded by his younger brother, William.



King William IV 1830 - 1837

Third son of George III, brother of George IV. He was known as the "Sailor King" because he joined the Royal Navy when he was only 13 years old. During his reign, England abolished slavery. Like his predecessors, he was also the King of Hanover.



Queen Victoria 1837 - 1901

Victoria was a granddaughter of George III and a niece of George IV and William IV. She married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg Gotha. During her reign, the British Empire grew powerful and rich. On May 1st 1876, she adopted the title "Empress of India". When she died in 1901, after the longest British reign in English history (64 years), the British Empire had reached its peak. Victoria had 9 children, 40 grandchildren and 37 great grandchildren, spread all over Europe.

9. The House of Saxe-Coburg Gotha/Windsor (German/English) (121 years)

King Edward VII 1901 - 1910

The oldest son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. He married Alexandra of Denmark and kept Europe at peace during his reign. He was known as “Edward the Peacemaker”.



King George V 1910 - 1936

Second son of Edward VII. When George came to the throne, he changed the family name from *Saxe-Coburg Gotha* to *Windsor* because of the anti-German feeling at that time. Particularly because German “Gotha” bombers were used to drop bombs on London. “**Windsor**” was considered to be a good English name! King George ruled Great Britain during the First World War (1914-1918). During his reign, women were allowed to vote for the first time, and, in 1918, Ireland was allowed to have an independent parliament. Ireland separated from Northern Ireland in 1922, and “the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland” became “the United Kingdom of Great Britain and **Northern** Ireland”.

King Edward VIII January 1936 - December 1936

Oldest son of George V. He ruled for just 11 months. He abdicated because he wanted to marry Mrs Wallis Simpson, a divorced American woman, and, at that time, monarchs were not allowed to marry divorcees. Mrs Simpson still had two living ex-husbands!



King George VI 1936 - 1952

Second son of George V and younger brother of Edward VIII. He was a very shy man who had a strong stammer. He became king because of his brother’s abdication. He ruled during the Second World War (1939-1945) and he refused to leave London during the blitz. The two princesses, his daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret, spent the war years at Windsor Castle. During his reign, Great Britain saw many great social changes, including the beginning of the National Health Service (NHS).

Queen Elizabeth II 1952 - 2022

Oldest daughter of George VI. In 1947, she married Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark. Philip was born into the Greek and Danish royal families. He was born in Greece, but his family was exiled from the country when he was very young. He was educated in France, Germany and the United Kingdom. Elizabeth and Philip were in Kenya when her father, the king, died (February 6th 1952). Elizabeth immediately succeeded to the throne. Her coronation, on June 2nd, 1953, was the first one to be televised. Queen Elizabeth II was the 40th monarch since William the Conqueror was crowned King of England in 1066. She was the longest serving monarch in British history (70 years).



King Charles III 2022 - present

Oldest son of Elizabeth. In 1981, he married Lady Diana Spencer, who was popularly known as Princess Di. They divorced in 1996 and Princess Di died in a car crash in Paris in 1997. In 2005 Charles married his long-time friend Camilla Parker Bowles. She is known as “Queen Consort”. She is very ugly.

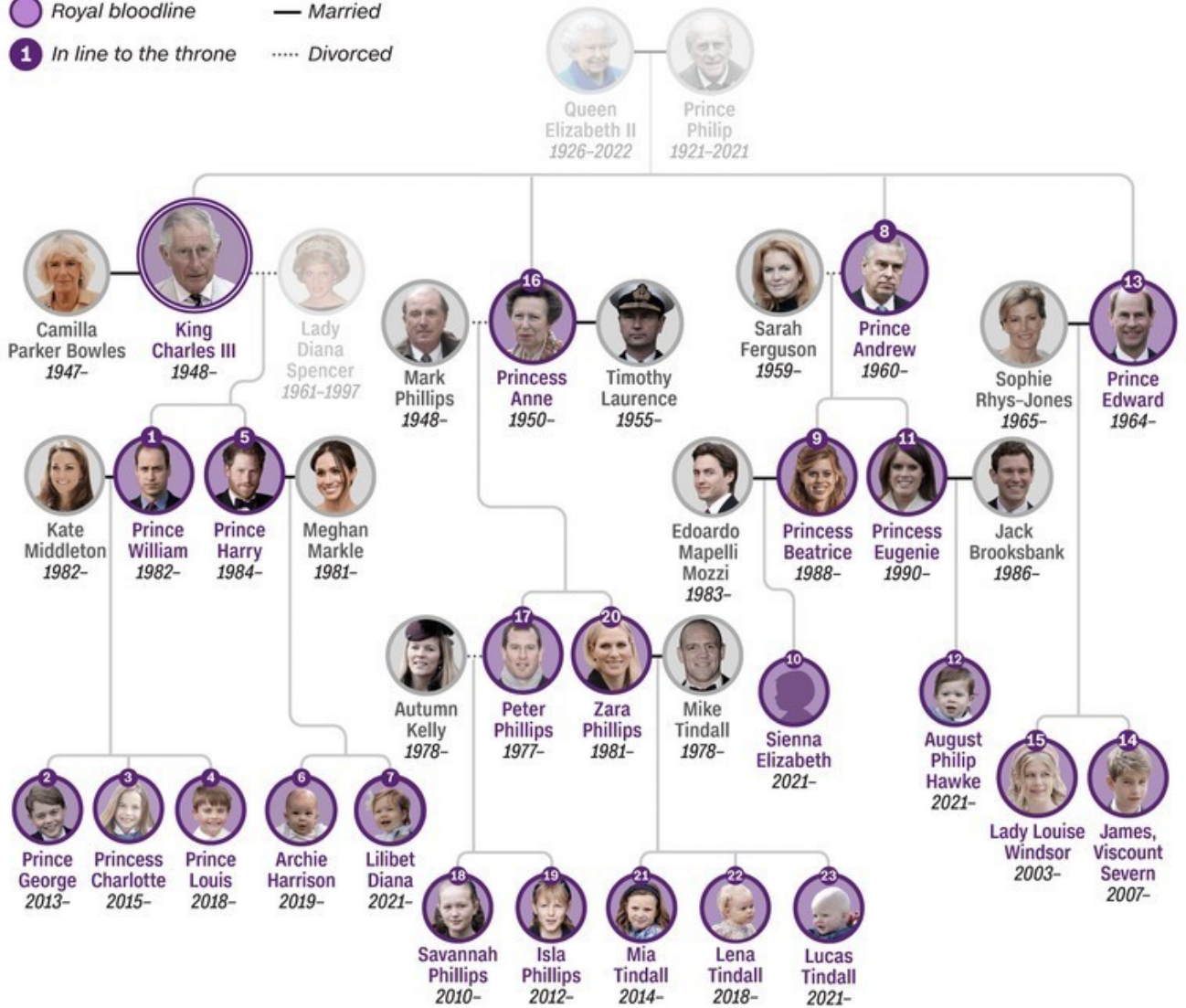


Who will be the next monarch?

King Charles' oldest son is William (born in 1982). He will become **King William V**.
See the family tree below.

British royal family tree

- Royal bloodline
- 1 In line to the throne
- Married
- Divorced



Source: The Royal Household

Some statistics:

Longest serving monarchs:

Queen Elizabeth II (UK)	1952 – 2022	70 years (longest serving UK monarch)
Queen Victoria (UK)	1837 – 1901	63 years
King George III (UK)	1760 – 1820	59 years
King James IV (Scotland) / James I (England)	1567 – 1625	57 years
King Henry III (England)	1216 – 1272	56 years (longest serving English monarch)
King Edward III (England)	1327 – 1377	50 years

Shortest serving monarchs:

Lady Jane Grey	1553	9 days (Not officially crowned)
King Edward V	1483	2 months
King Edward VIII	1936	11 months

Youngest monarchs:

King Henry VI	1422 – 1461	9 months old
King Edward VI	1547 – 1553	9 years old
King Edward V	1483	12 years old
Lady Jane Grey	1554	17 years old

Longest living monarchs:

Queen Elizabeth II	Died at 96 years old
Queen Victoria	Died at 81 years old

Oldest monarchs on coronation:

King Charles III	73 years old
King William IV	64 years old
King Edward VII	59 years old

Female monarchs (6/60 = 10%):

Lady Jane Grey	1553 (9 days) (Not officially crowned)
Queen Mary I	1553 – 1558
Queen Elizabeth I	1558 – 1603
Queen Mary II	1688 – 1694
Queen Anne	1702 – 1714
Queen Victoria	1837 – 1901
Queen Elizabeth II	1952 – 2022

Names of the country

9th Century - the 7 Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were unified into one – the kingdom of "**England**".

1603 – England and Scotland were united to form "**Great Britain**".

1801 – Great Britain and Ireland were united to form "**The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland**".

1922 – Ireland was politically separated into "Ireland (Eire)" and "Northern Ireland" due to a religious war, so "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland" was renamed to "**The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**" (aka "**The UK**").

Names count

• Henry	8
• Edward	8
• George	6
• William	4
• Richard	3
• James	2
• Charles	3
• Mary	2
• Elizabeth	2
• John	1
• Stephen	1
• Jane	1
• Anne	1
• Victoria	1

Origins of names

• Anne	- from Hebrew, meaning 'favour' or 'grace'
• Charles	- from Anglo-Saxon, meaning 'free man'
• Edward	- from Anglo-Saxon, meaning 'protector of wealth'
• Elizabeth	- from Hebrew, meaning 'my God is an oath'
• George	- from Greek, meaning 'farmer'
• Henry	- from Germanic origins, meaning 'home ruler'
• James	- from Hebrew, meaning 'one who follows'
• Jane	- from Hebrew, meaning 'merciful'
• John	- from Hebrew, meaning 'graced by God'
• Mary	- from Hebrew, meaning 'beloved'
• Richard	- from Germanic origins, meaning 'strong ruler'
• Stephen	- from Greek, meaning 'crown'
• Victoria	- from Latin, meaning 'victory'
• William	- from Germanic origins, meaning 'vehement protector'