



What should I already know?

- After the Roman left, Britain was vulnerable and was invaded by the Anglo-Saxons. The land they settled in was 'Angle-land', or England.
- Many Anglo-Saxons came peacefully, to find land to farm and over time many were converted to Christianity.
- Human and physical geographical features of the UK, including the resources available in Britain.
- The chronology of British history.

Viking Life and Beliefs

- The Vikings were **not Christian**. They believed in a whole range of **gods** and mystical creatures. The best known Viking gods are **Odin**, Thor, and Freya.
- Vikings lived in **longhouses** with their families.
- Most Vikings were **farmers** and grew barley, wheat and rye.
- They were also fine **craftsmen**.



Trelleborg Viking Shield
Photo: National Museum of Denmark

Viking Invaders

- The Vikings came from the modern Scandinavian countries of **Denmark, Norway** and **Sweden**. They travelled in boats called **longships** and first arrived in Britain around **AD 787**.
- The Vikings **raided** places such as **monasteries** and pillaged expensive items to trade. They were looking for valuable goods like gold and jewels, imported foods and other useful materials.
- The Vikings also wanted to **claim land** and tried to take over much of Britain. By AD 878 the Vikings had settled permanently in Britain.

Technical vocabulary

danelaw	The area in Britain that the Danish Vikings ruled over
monastery	A building or buildings occupied by a community of monks living under religious vows.
Scandinavia	Group of countries in northern Europe that includes Denmark, Norway and Sweden.
raid	a sudden attack to steal or destroy.
trade	Buying/selling goods with other people, often peacefully

Raiders

- Vikings used **axes, spears, swords, shields**, bows.
- Most wore **no heavy armour** – shields were key.
- Raids were **quick, violent attacks**, usually on churches/monasteries.
- They took treasure, livestock, goods, and sometimes prisoners.
- **Berserkers** were fierce fighters who scared enemies.
- Raiding was strategic: hit when enemies were unprepared.

Traders

- Vikings used their **advanced longships** not just for raids but for **trading and long journeys**.
- They traded goods across **Europe, Russia, and even to the Middle East**.
- Items they **bought** included silver, silk, spices, wine and jewellery
- Some Vikings **explored and settled new lands** like Iceland, Greenland, and reached **North America** long before Columbus



A painting of about 1673 of the harbour defences at Lindsfarne. The ruins of the priory are to the left, with Lindsfarne Castle on the right.