



What should I already know?

- After the Romans 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.

Map of Viking Homelands and Settlements

Key
■ Viking Settlements
■ Viking Homelands



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**.

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.



Trelleborg Viking Shield
Photo: National Museum of Denmark

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 Lindisfarne. The ruins of the priory are to the left, with Lindisfarne Castle on the right.