



English Rulers

History Study Guide Version 3.1

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Early Rulers

Answer	Reign	Details
Alfred the Great	871-899	King of Wessex ; the only English king to have the title "the Great ;" first king of the Anglo-Saxons
William the Conqueror	1066-1087	led the Norman Conquest of England, partially by winning the Battle of Hastings in the year 1066 ; conquest is chronicled in the Bayeux Tapestry ; ordered the creation of the Domesday Book (pronounced "doomsday"), a census of the landholdings of England; nicknamed William the Bastard
Richard I	1189-1199	nicknamed "Richard the Lionhearted " (or " Lionheart ") due to his military conquests, especially during the Third Crusade ; from the House of Angevin
John	1199-1216	signed the Magna Carta with the English Barons; nicknamed "Lackland;" brother of Richard I from the House of Angevin
(Wars of the Roses)	1455-1487	fought between the two branches of the House of Plantagenet: the House of Lancaster and the House of York. Lancaster won under Henry VII Tudor, who married Elizabeth of York to make peace as king.

House of Tudor

Answer	Reign	Details
Henry VII	1457-1509	defeated Richard III during the Wars of the Roses at the Battle of Bosworth Field to establish the ruling House of Tudor
Henry VIII	1509-1547	divorced first wife, Catherine of Aragon , when she did not produce a male heir, and split with the Catholic church to do so; used the first Act of Supremacy to form the Church of England with himself as the head of the church; ultimately had six wives (divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived); father of Edward VI , Mary I , and Elizabeth I
Mary I	1553-1558	nicknamed Bloody Mary because she tried to turn England back to Catholicism by executing Protestant figureheads; daughter of Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first wife
Elizabeth I	1558-1603	patron of Shakespeare ; gave the Tilbury Speech during which she said "I have the heart and stomach of a king" to motivate troops preparing to battle the Spanish Armada , which was defeated by Sir Francis Drake ; took power while putting down claims to the throne by Lady Jane Grey and Mary, Queen of Scots ; officially founded the Church of England using an Act of Supremacy (see Henry VIII); nicknamed Virginia or the Virgin Queen because she never married or produced an heir; last Tudor who was succeeded by the House of Stuart's James I; daughter of Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's second wife

House of Stuart, the Commonwealth, and the House of Orange

Answer	Reign	Details
James I and VI	1566-1625	took power after Elizabeth I died without an heir; sixth King James of Scotland and first King James of England
Charles I	1625-1649	beheaded by Oliver Cromwell during the English Civil War
Oliver Cromwell (Commonwealth)	1653-1658	first Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England; led the New Model Army at the Battle of Marston Moor and the Battle of Naseby during the English Civil War against the Royalist supporters of the House of Stuart; ordered the beheading of Charles I; dissolved the Rump Parliament and established the Barebones Parliament to gain power; briefly succeeded as Lord Protector by his son, Richard, before the Stuarts regained power
Charles II	1660-1685	first king of the Restoration period after Oliver Cromwell's commonwealth was overthrown; ruled during the 1666 Great Fire of London; nicknamed the Merry Monarch
William and Mary (House of Orange)	1689-1702	took England from James II, the brother of Charles II in the Glorious Revolution ; ruled jointly (William is III and Mary is II); ruled when the Act of Settlement 1701 banned Catholics from ruling England
Anne	1702-1714	Acts of Union united England and Scotland in 1706, making Anne the first Queen of Great Britain and Ireland; last Stuart monarch

House of Hanover

Answer	Reign	Details
George I	1714-1727	took power from Anne because he was protestant (see Act of Settlement under William and Mary); served by Prime Minister Robert Walpole; lost money during the South Sea Bubble
George III	1760-1820	ruled during American Revolution , the Gordon Riot , and the Seven Years War ; nicknamed the "mad king," possibly because he had porphyria; his son, George IV, ruled unofficially during the Regency Period before officially taking the throne himself; served by Prime Ministers Pitt the Elder, Pitt the Younger, and Lord North
Victoria	1837-1901	served by warring Prime Ministers Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone and by Prime Minister Robert Peel ; became Empress of India in 1876; ruled long enough to have the first Diamond Jubilee ; married Prince Albert of the house of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, so her son Edward VII took over as part of a new ruling house that became the House of Windsor (see below)

House of Windsor (formerly House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha)

Answer	Reign	Details
Elizabeth II	1952-2022	ruled long enough to have the first Platinum Jubilee , and is the longest reigning British monarch; married Prince Philip; during her annus horribilis (horrible year) in 1992, several of her children divorced or separated, and Windsor Castle burned; known for keeping corgis
Charles III	2022-present	married to Camilla Parker-Bowles; divorced Princess Diana shortly before her death; father of Prince William (heir apparent) and Prince Harry with Princess Diana