

All About Hill Forts



Timeline of British History

Iron Age



800BC
– AD43

Romans in Britain



AD43
– AD410

Vikings



AD793
– AD1066

Tudors



AD1485
– AD1603

Victorians



AD1837
– AD1901

Modern Britain



1945 –
Present Day

What Was the Iron Age?

The Iron Age in Britain was from 800 BC to AD43, when the Romans arrived in Britain.

It was a time where iron was used to make tools and weapons. Iron was heated and then hammered into whatever shape was required. Iron could be used to make heavy ploughs which made it easier to grow food in different types of soil. This also meant that new types of crops could be grown.



What Was the Iron Age?

Other inventions that were an important part of the Iron Age were the potters wheel and a machine called a rotary quern. A rotary quern was two small circles with a handle at the top. Grain was poured through a hole in the middle of the top circle. When the handle was turned, the grain was ground down into flour, which could then be used to make bread more quickly and easily.



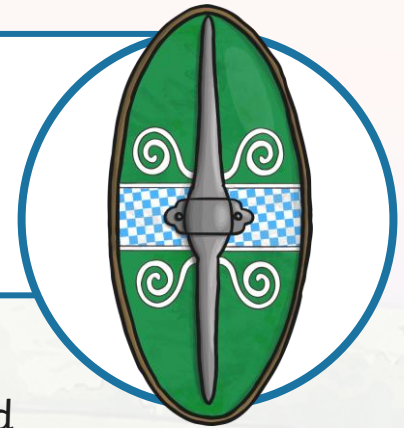
These inventions contributed to the growth in population. Historians think the population of Iron Age Britain increased to over one million people.

Only a quarter of children in the Iron Age survived to adulthood.

Did You Know?

What Was the Iron Age?

During the Iron Age, people belonged to tribes, lead by a king or queen. Tribes frequently fought each other, using weapons made of iron. These weapons included arrows, daggers, swords, spears and shields.



People believed in many gods and goddesses. Priests, called druids, lead religious ceremonies where animals were sacrificed to spirits. Weapons were thrown into rivers as a sacrifice. They had festivals including Imbolc (celebrating the birth of lambs), Beltane (celebrating the summer), Lughnassad (a bit like an Iron Age Harvest Festival) and Samhain (celebrating the end of the year). They believed in an after-life, so people were buried with possessions to take with them to the next life.



Life expectancy in the Iron Age was 25 years old.

Did You Know?

What Were Hill Forts?

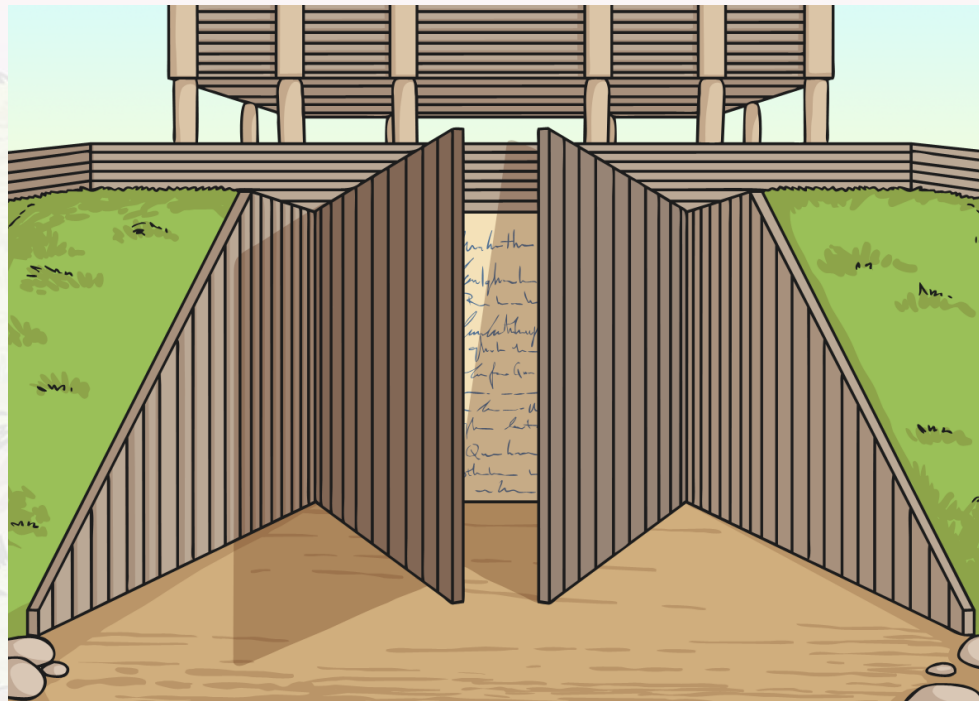
During the Iron Age, many people lived in settlements called hill forts. A hill fort could be home to hundreds of people. These settlements were on higher ground.

'Our hillforts were on higher ground as it made it easier to defend our tribe against attacks from other tribes. We could spot attackers coming and launch weapons such as arrows with iron tips'.



How Were Hill Forts Designed for Defence?

At the base of lots of hill forts, there were ditches which would be difficult for attackers to cross. They were also surrounded by high wooden walls.



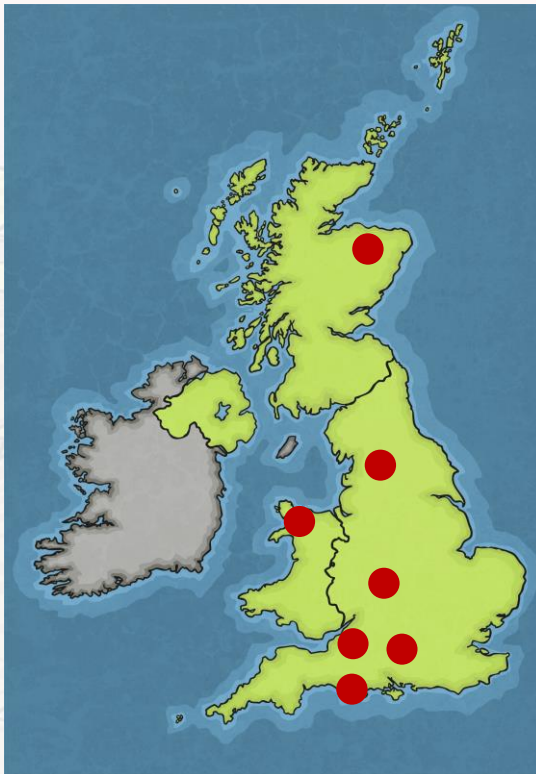
What Were Hill Forts Like?

This is a photo of the remains of the hill fort at Maiden Castle. You can see the steep banks. At the top, the tribe would have lived in roundhouses, with their cattle grazing outside. Crops and other goods were sold at the market. Tribes went about their daily lives, knowing they had a clear view of approaching enemies.



How Can We Learn More about Hill Forts?

There are many examples of hill forts we can still explore today.



Maiden Castle, Dorchester

Ingleborough, North Yorkshire

Tre'r Ceiri, Llŷn Peninsula North Wales

British Camp, Malvern Hills

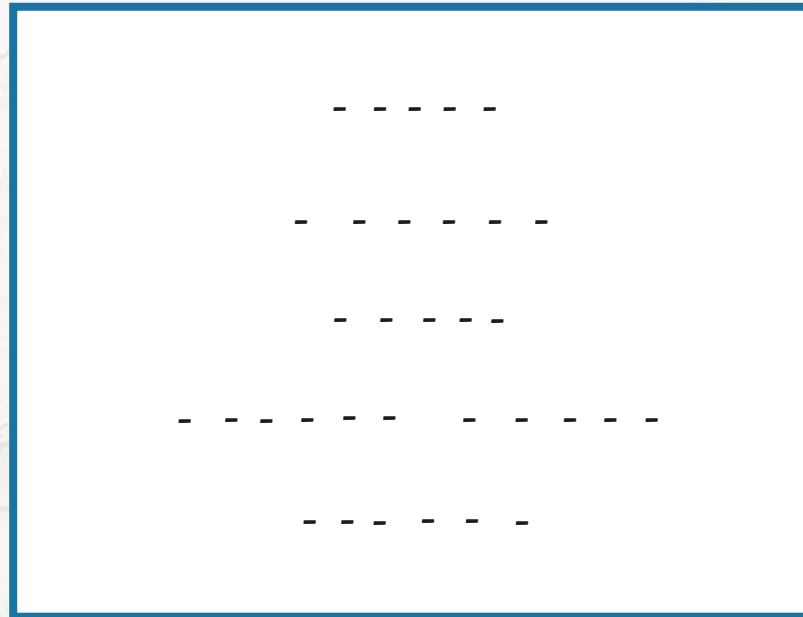
Danebury, Hampshire

Mither Tap, Aberdeenshire

Cadbury Castle, Somerset

Guess the Word

Can you guess the word before all the letters appear?
Call out the word when you work out what it is





twinkl