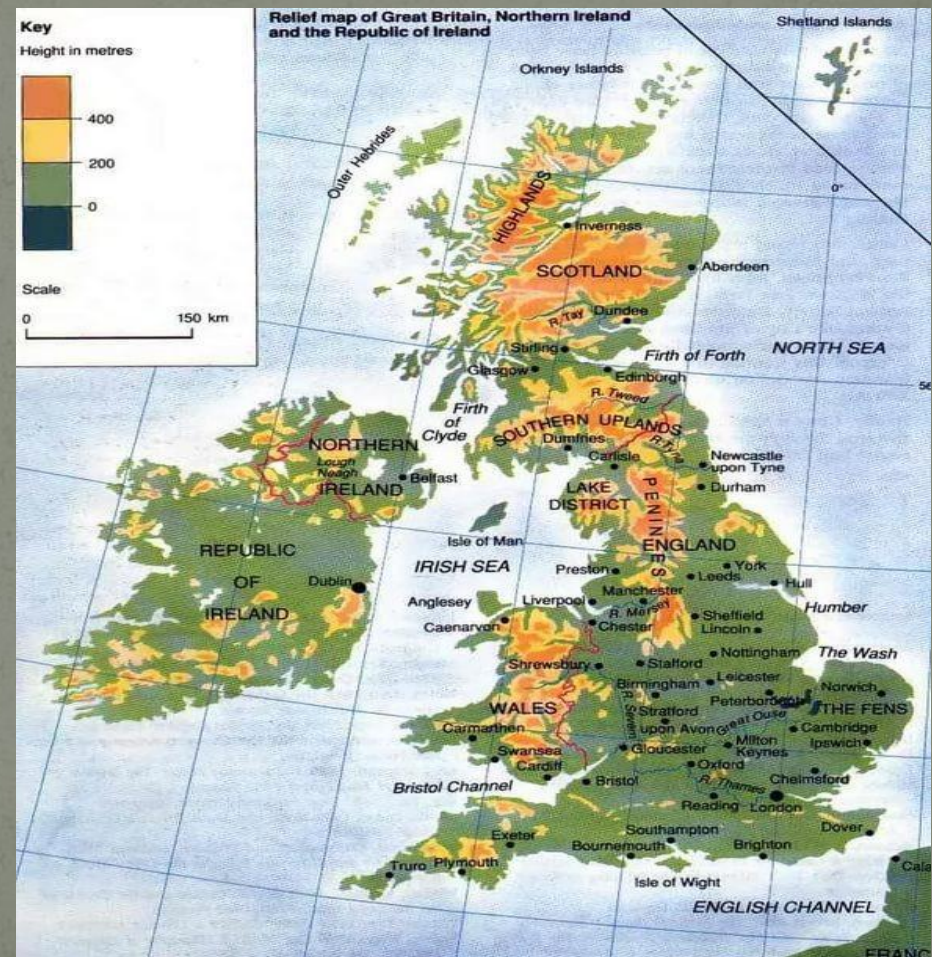


# The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



# Geographical position of the United Kingdom

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is situated on the British Isles. They lie to the north-west of Europe and are separated from the continent by the narrow strait of water. It is called the English Channel. Seas and oceans influence the British climate. It is too cold in winter but never very hot in summer.



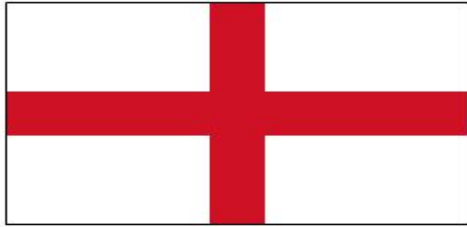
The United Kingdom consists of four parts: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. England is the central part, it occupies the most of the island of Great Britain. Each part has its capital: the capital of England is London, Scotland has Edinburgh, Wales has Cardiff, and the main city of Northern Ireland is Belfast.



# The flag of the UK

- Union Jack is the name of the flag of the United Kingdom. Union Flag, as it is officially called, is a combination of several flags: Scottish, English and Irish. The creation of the flag started when Scotland joined England and Wales. It originally consisted of English and Scottish flags: St. Andrew's cross, blue flag with a white cross, was joined with English St. George's Cross, white flag with a red cross. This way original Union Jack of 1606 was a blue flag with two crosses (white and red). Later, in 1801 when Ireland joined the union a red cross from St. Patrick's Cross (Irish flag) was added to the flag and the Union Jack began to look as it does today. Despite being a part of the United Kingdom, Welsh flag (St. David) is not represented on the flag of the union. The reason might be that Wales is not a kingdom. It is interesting to notice that the Union Jack is also a part of the flags of Australia and New Zealand. King James III ordered that the flag should be flown on the main mast of all British ships.





**England**

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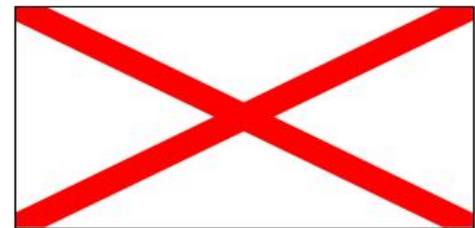


**Scotland**



**Original Union Flag  
(1606)**

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**Ireland**



**Current Union Flag  
(1801)**

# The Royal Coat of Arms

In the Royal Arms three lions symbolize England, a lion rampant - Scotland, and a harp - Ireland. The whole is encircled and is supported by a lion and a unicorn. The lion has been used as a symbol of national strength and of the British monarchy for many centuries. The unicorn, a mythical animal that looks like a horse with a long straight horn, has appeared on the Scottish and British royal coats of arms for many centuries, and is a symbol of purity.



# The National Anthem

1. God save our gracious Queen,  
Long live our noble Queen?  
God save the Queen!  
Send her victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us;  
God save the Queen!

2. O Lord our God arise,  
Scatter her enemies  
And make them fall;  
Confound their politics,  
Frustrate their knavish tricks,  
On Thee our hopes we fix,  
God save us all!

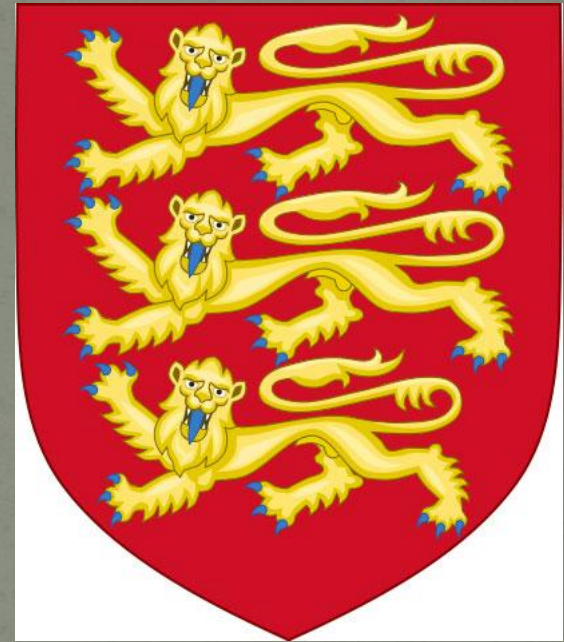
3. Thy choicest gifts in store  
On her be pleased to pour;  
Long may she reign;  
May she defend our laws,  
And ever give us cause  
To sign with hearts and voice,  
God save the Queen!



Her Majesty Queen Elisabeth II

# The symbols of England

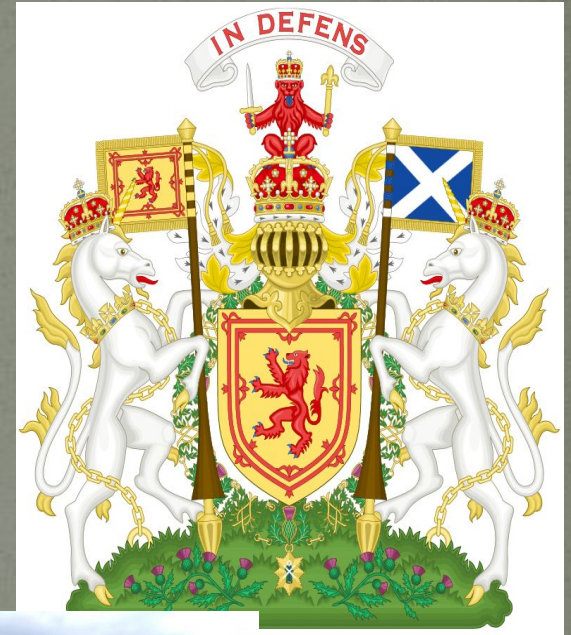
St. George's Day falls on 23 April and is regarded as England's national day. On this day some patriotic Englishmen wear a rose pinned to their jackets'. A red rose is the national emblem of England from the time of the Wars of the Roses (15th century).





# The symbols of Scotland

St. Andrew's Day (the 30th of November) is regarded as Scotland's national day. On this day some Scotsmen wear a thistle in their buttonhole. As a national emblem of Scotland, thistle apparently first used in the 15th century as a symbol of defence. The Order of the Thistle is one of the highest orders of knighthood. It was founded in 1687, and is mainly given to Scottish noblemen (limited to 16 in number).



# The symbols of Northern Ireland

St. Patrick's Day (the 17th of March) is considered as a national day in Northern Ireland and an official bank holiday there. The national emblem of Ireland is shamrock. According to legend, it was the plant chosen by St. Patrick to illustrate the Christian doctrine of the Trinity to the Irish.



# The symbols of Wales

St. David's Day (the 1st of March) is the church festival of St. David, a 6th-century monk and bishop, the patron saint of Wales. The day is regarded as the national holiday of Wales, although it is not an official bank holiday.

On this day, however, many Welshmen wear either a yellow daffodil or a leek pinned to their jackets, as both plants are traditionally regarded as national emblems of Wales.



The capital of Great Britain is London; it is the cultural center of the country and is situated on the banks of the Thames. There are a lot of places of interest to visit. The Big Ben, the Tower Bridge over the river Thames, the International London Heathrow Airport, the Westminster Abbey, the National Gallery of Art and many others.



# The International Heathrow Airport



# The Westminster Abbey



# The National Gallery of Art

