



LONDON

THE CAPITAL CITY





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❖ London is the capital city of England and of the United Kingdom, with a population of about 6-7 million. It is the largest city in Britain and one of the largest in the world.

Historical and geographical circumstances have made London one of the world's most important commercial and cultural centre, while its range of historical connections and its buildings attract millions of tourists from overseas each year.

❖ London is a focus of civilization and political wisdom - exercised with unique democratic effect in the historical record of the House of Commons - truly exemplary in the western world. It is the capital where a respect for all ideas has been transformed into a genuine rite unanimously obeyed and respected, and where coexistence is a social imperative born of civic customs of rank and vigorous ancestors.






❖ The gradual growth of the city helps to explain the fact that London does not have just one centre, it has a number of centres, each with a distinct character: the financial and business centre called the City (spelt with the capital C), the shopping and entertainment centre in West End, the government centre in Westminster.

❖ London is the city of great variety, ranging from the narrow medieval street-patterns of the City to the spacious neo-classical squares of Belgravia. Two enduring architectural influences have been Sir Christopher Wren (rebuilder of St. Paul's Cathedral after the Great Fire of 1666), the spires of whose 29 surviving City churches still contribute an imaginative element to the City skyline, and John Nash, who under the patronage of the Prince Regent, later George IV, at the beginning of the 19th century laid out a large part of London (including Regent's Park, Regent Street and the Mall) in one of the grandest examples of town planning.





The most famous older buildings in London include Buckingham Palace (the Sovereign's residence in London), the Houses of Parliament (an outstanding example of nineteenth-century Gothic Revival architecture), St. Paul's Cathedral (the second largest church in Europe), Westminster Abbey (where Sovereigns are crowned), and the Tower of London.

The length and breadth of Greater London extends over an area of 700 square miles. The whole of London is full of buildings of incalculable artistic areas - the City, Piccadilly, Hyde Park Corner to the banks of the Thames - providing an unforgettable and impressive image.





