

The Vikings in Britain [B2]

L'epoca dei Vichinghi, compresa tra il 750 e il 1050 d.C., ha cambiato la mappa dell'Europa e ha lasciato un'eredità duratura in Gran Bretagna. Navigatori, esploratori, guerrieri: chi erano i Vichinghi e quali erano i loro costumi?

In June 793, [Norse raiders](#) attacked the isolated monastery of Lindisfarne in Northumbria, located on a [tidal island off the northeast coast](#) of England. They stole books and treasures and murdered the monks who lived there. From these violent beginnings, the invaders gradually became part of British civilisation: the Viking Age had begun. Today, almost a thousand years after their [rule](#) in Britain ended, the Vikings remain part of popular culture. They feature in the literary and filmic landscape of Lord of the Rings and in TV series such as Vikings and The Last Kingdom.

PIRATES

The name 'Vikings' [loosely](#) translates as 'pirates' in Old [Norse](#). But although it is used today to describe the Scandinavian people of a specific period of history, it would not have been recognised at the time, or by the [Norse seafarers](#) themselves. During the Viking Age, there was an unprecedented movement of people from the European continent: raiding and occupying, but also exploring, trading and exchanging techniques and ideas. The Vikings travelled [further and wider](#) than most — and Scandinavia was opened up to new peoples and cultures as never before.

DANELAW

The [plunder](#) of Lindisfarne was not the first or last Viking raid on the British Isles. Over the decades that followed, further Viking raids led to winter camps and more permanent [settlements](#). When the Vikings [defeated](#) the Anglo-Saxons in Eoforwic (present-day York) in 867, they adapted the name to Jorvik, and it became an important Viking capital in northern England. Colonisation of other areas followed under Danelaw (a large region [ruled](#) by

Viking laws and customs) and King Cnut [ruled](#) both the Danish and English kingdoms until his death in 1035.

BURIALS

Archaeologists have plenty of evidence of the Viking Age, from battlefields and Viking [settlements](#), from [finds](#) of weapons, coins, jewellery and [household items](#). One of the best ways of understanding the Viking [mindset](#) is to explore [burial sites](#). Viking burials were ritualised and carefully planned. The remains, artefacts and monuments from these sites provide a window into Viking beliefs and spirituality.

STORYTELLING

Linking the archaeological evidence of the Vikings are written sources from later centuries: letters, epic poems, Viking sagas, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, often based on oral history. There are many stories about famous battles involving Vikings and their courage in combat. However, a decisive [defeat](#) to the English army at the Battle of Stamford Bridge near York in 1066 signalled the end of Viking dominance in Britain. Today, what remains are historic sites, artefacts, place names — and legends.

Glossary

- **household items** = oggetti domestici
- **burial sites** = luogo di sepoltura
- **plunder** = saccheggio
- **defeat** = sconfitta
- **raiders** = saccheggiatori
- **off the northeast coast** = al largo della costa
- **rule** = governo
- **seafarers** = navigatori, marinai
- **further and wider** = più lontano e ampio
- **settlements** = insediamenti
- **mindset** = mentalità
- **Norse** = nordici, norreni
- **tidal island** = isola tidale
- **loosely** = genericamente
- **finds** = ritrovamenti