Cologne Cathedral

**Cologne Cathedral** ([German](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language): *Kölner Dom*, officially *Hohe Domkirche Sankt Petrus*, English: **Cathedral Church of**[**Saint Peter**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Peter)) is a [Catholic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic) [cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral) in [Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne), [North Rhine-Westphalia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Rhine-Westphalia). It is the seat of the [Archbishop of Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archbishop_of_Cologne) and of the administration of the [Archdiocese of Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archdiocese_of_Cologne). It is a renowned monument of [German Catholicism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholicism_in_Germany) and [Gothic architecture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture) and was declared a [World Heritage Site](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_Site)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-UNESCO-3) in 1996.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-4) It is [Germany's most visited landmark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism_in_Germany#Landmarks), attracting an average of 20,000 people a day.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-5) At 157 m (515 ft), the cathedral is currently the tallest twin-spired church in the world, the second tallest church in Europe after [Ulm Minster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulm_Minster), and the third tallest church in the world.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-6) It is the largest [Gothic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture) church in Northern Europe and has the [second-tallest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_tallest_churches_in_the_world) [spires](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spire). The towers for its two huge spires give the cathedral the largest façade of any church in the world. The [choir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Choir_(architecture)) has the largest height-to-width ratio, 3.6:1, of any [medieval](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval) church.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-7)[[*page needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citing_sources)]

Construction of Cologne Cathedral began in 1248 but was halted in the years around 1560,[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral" \l "cite_note-8) unfinished. Work did not restart until the 1840s, and the edifice was completed to its original Medieval plan in 1880.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-9)

Cologne's medieval builders had planned a grand structure to house the [reliquary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reliquary) of the [Three Kings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Kings) and fit its role as a place of worship for the [Holy Roman Emperor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Roman_Emperor). Despite having been left incomplete during the medieval period, Cologne Cathedral eventually became unified as "a masterpiece of exceptional intrinsic value" and "a powerful testimony to the strength and persistence of Christian belief in medieval and modern Europe".[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-UNESCO-3) Only the telecommunications tower is higher than the Cathedral.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-10)

History[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=1" \o "Edit section: History)]

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Dombild_Maria_Anbetung-5195_(cropped).jpg)

The [Dombild Altarpiece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dombild_Altarpiece" \o "Dombild Altarpiece) of the [Three Kings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Kings) by [Stefan Lochner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stefan_Lochner).

**Ancient site**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=2" \o "Edit section: Ancient site)]

When construction began on the present Cologne Cathedral in 1248 with laying a [foundation stone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornerstone), the site had already been occupied by several previous structures. The earliest may have been for grain storage and possibly was succeeded by a [Roman temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_temple) built by [Mercurius Augustus](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mercurius_Augustus&action=edit&redlink=1" \o "Mercurius Augustus (page does not exist)). From the 4th century on, however, the site was occupied by Christian buildings, including a square edifice known as the "oldest cathedral" that was commissioned by [Maternus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maternus_of_Cologne" \o "Maternus of Cologne), the first bishop of Cologne. A free-standing [baptistery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptistery) dating back to the 7th century was located at the east end of the present cathedral but was demolished in the 9th century to build the second cathedral. During excavations of the present cathedral, graves were discovered in the location of the oldest portion of the building; including that of a boy that was richly adorned with [grave goods](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grave_goods) and another of a woman, popularly thought to be [Wisigard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisigard" \o "Wisigard). Both graves are thought to be from the 6th century. Only ruins of the baptistery and the octagonal [baptismal font](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptismal_font) remain today.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

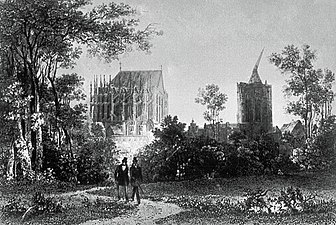
The second church, called the "Old Cathedral", was completed in 818. It was destroyed by fire on 30 April 1248, during demolition work to prepare for a new cathedral.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

**Medieval beginning**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=3" \o "Edit section: Medieval beginning)]

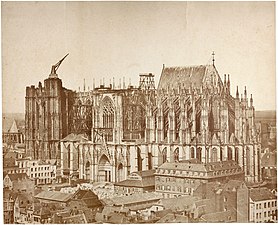
In 1164, the [Archbishop of Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archbishop_of_Cologne), [Rainald of Dassel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainald_of_Dassel" \o "Rainald of Dassel), acquired the relics of the [Three Kings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Kings) which the [Holy Roman Emperor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Roman_Empire), [Frederick Barbarossa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_I,_Holy_Roman_Emperor), had taken from the [Basilica of Sant'Eustorgio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica_of_Sant%27Eustorgio), Milan, Italy. (Parts of the relics have since been returned to Milan.) The relics have great religious significance and drew pilgrims from all over [Christendom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christendom). It was important to church officials that they be properly housed, and thus began a building program in the new style of [Gothic architecture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture), based in particular on the French cathedral of [Amiens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amiens_Cathedral).[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

The [foundation stone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foundation_stone) was laid on 15 August 1248, by Archbishop [Konrad von Hochstaden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konrad_von_Hochstaden).[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-11) The eastern arm was completed under the direction of [Master Gerhard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Master_Gerhard), was consecrated in 1322 and sealed off by a temporary wall so it could be used as the work continued. Eighty-four [misericords](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misericord) in the choir date from this building phase.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

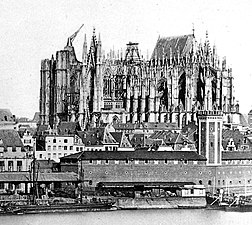
In the mid-14th century work on the west front commenced under Master Michael. This work ceased in 1473, leaving the south tower complete to the belfry level and crowned with a huge crane that remained in place as a landmark of the Cologne skyline for 400 years.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-12)[[*page needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citing_sources)] Some work proceeded intermittently on the structure of the [nave](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nave) between the west front and the eastern arm, but during the 16th century this also stopped.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-13)[[*page needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citing_sources)]

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Botanischer-Garten-am-Dom-um-1820.JPG)

The unfinished cathedral as in 1820, engraved by [Henry Winkles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Winkles). The huge crane on the tower of the cathedral is visible in the picture.

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Johannesfranciscus-Michiels_bau-des-doms-koeln-1855.jpg)

The unfinished cathedral as in 1855. The medieval crane was still in place, while constructions for the [nave](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nave) had been resumed earlier in 1814.

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rheinpanorama_1856_detail_Dom.jpg)

The unfinished cathedral as in 1856. The east end had been finished and roofed, while other parts of the building are in various stages of construction.

**19th-century completion**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=4" \o "Edit section: 19th-century completion)]

With the 19th-century [Romantic enthusiasm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Romanticism) for the [Middle Ages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages), and spurred by the discovery of the original plan for the façade, it was decided, with the commitment of the Protestant [Prussian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prussia) Court, to complete the cathedral. It was achieved by civic effort; the [*Central-Dombauverein*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central-Dombauverein), founded in 1842, raised two-thirds of the enormous costs, while the Prussian state supplied the remaining third.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] The state saw this as a way to improve its relations with the large number of Catholic subjects it had gained in 1815, but especially after 1871, it was regarded as a project to symbolize German nationhood.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-14)

Work resumed in 1842 to the original design of the surviving medieval plans and drawings, but utilizing more modern construction techniques, including iron roof girders. The nave was completed and the towers were added. The bells were installed in the 1870s. The largest bell is [St. Petersglocke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersglocke).[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

The completion of Germany's largest cathedral was celebrated as a national event on 14 August 1880, 632 years after construction had begun.[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-Chicago1895-15) The celebration was attended by Emperor [Wilhelm I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_I_of_Germany). With a height of 157.38 metres (516.3 ft), it was the tallest building in the world for four years until the completion of the [Washington Monument](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Monument).[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-16)

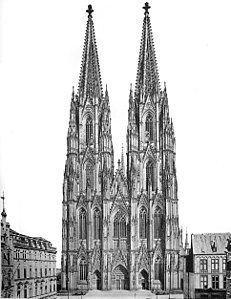
**World War II and post-war history**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=5" \o "Edit section: World War II and post-war history)]

The cathedral suffered fourteen hits by [aerial bombs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombing_of_Cologne_in_World_War_II) during [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II). Badly damaged, it nevertheless remained standing in an otherwise completely flattened city. The twin spires were an easily recognizable navigational landmark for Allied aircraft bombing.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

On 6 March 1945, an area west of the cathedral (Marzellenstrasse/Trankgasse) was the site of intense combat between American tanks of the [3rd Armored Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3rd_Armored_Division_(United_States)) and a [Panther Ausf. A](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panther_Tank) of [Panzer brigade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panzer_brigade) 106 Feldherrnhalle. The Panther successfully knocked out a [Sherman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M4_Sherman), killing three men, before it was destroyed by a [T26E3 Pershing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M26_Pershing" \o "M26 Pershing) hours later. Footage of that battle survives. The destroyed Panther was later put on display at the base of the cathedral for the remainder of the war in Europe.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

Repairs of the war damage were completed in 1956. An [emergency repair to the base](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6lner_Domplombe) of the northwest tower, carried out in 1944 using poor-quality brick taken from a nearby ruined building, remained visible as a reminder of the war until 2005, when it was decided to restore the section to its original appearance.

Repair and maintenance work is constantly being carried out in one or another section of the building, which is rarely completely free of scaffolding, as wind, rain, and pollution slowly eat away at the stones. The *Dombauhütte*, established to build the cathedral and keep it in repair, is said[*[by whom?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch" \l "Unsupported_attributions" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Words to watch)*] to employ the best stonemasons in the Rhineland. Half the costs of repair and maintenance are still borne by the [Dombauverein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dombauverein" \o "Dombauverein).[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hasak_-_Der_Dom_zu_K%C3%B6ln_-_Bild_02_Westseite.jpg)

The west front of the completed cathedral in 1911

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Warning_sign_in_cologne.jpg)

US soldier and destroyed [Panther tank](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panther_tank), 4 April 1945.

**21st century**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=6" \o "Edit section: 21st century)]

On 18 August 2005, [Pope Benedict XVI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Benedict_XVI) visited the cathedral during his apostolic visit to Germany, as part of [World Youth Day 2005](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Youth_Day_2005) festivities. An estimated one million pilgrims visited the cathedral during this time. Also as part of the events of World Youth Day, Cologne Cathedral hosted a televised gala performance of [Beethoven](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beethoven)'s [Missa Solemnis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missa_Solemnis_(Beethoven)" \o "Missa Solemnis (Beethoven)), performed by the [Royal Philharmonic Orchestra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Philharmonic_Orchestra) and the [London Philharmonic Choir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London_Philharmonic_Choir) conducted by Sir [Gilbert Levine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilbert_Levine).[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-17)

On 25 August 2007, the cathedral received a [new stained glass window](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral_Window) in the south [transept](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transept). The 113 square metres (1,220 sq ft) glass work was created by the German artist [Gerhard Richter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerhard_Richter) with the €400,000 cost paid by donations. It is composed of 11,500 identically sized pieces of colored glass resembling [pixels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pixel), randomly arranged by computer, which create a colorful "carpet". Since the loss of the original window in World War II, the space had been temporarily filled with plain glass.[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-18) The then archbishop of the cathedral, [Cardinal Joachim Meisner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joachim_Meisner), who had preferred a figurative depiction of 20th-century Catholic martyrs for the window, did not attend the unveiling.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-19) Holder of the office since 2014 is Cardinal [Rainer Maria Woelki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainer_Maria_Woelki). On 5 January 2015, the cathedral remained dark as floodlights were switched off to protest a demonstration by [PEGIDA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PEGIDA" \o "PEGIDA).[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-bbc-20)

**World Heritage Site**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=7" \o "Edit section: World Heritage Site)]

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:K%C3%B6ln_Cathedral_on_the_banks_of_Rhine_01.jpg)

Cologne Cathedral on the banks of Rhine

In 1996, the cathedral was added to the [UNESCO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO) [World Heritage List](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_List) of culturally important sites.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-21) In 2004, it was placed on the "World Heritage in Danger" list, as the only Western site in danger, due to plans to construct several high-rise buildings nearby, which would have visually impacted the site.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-22)[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-23) The cathedral was removed from the list in 2006, following the authorities' decision to limit the heights of buildings constructed near and around the cathedral.[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-24)

As a World Heritage Site and host to the [Shrine of the Three Kings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shrine_of_the_Three_Kings), Cologne Cathedral is a major attraction for tourists and pilgrims, and is one of the oldest and most important pilgrimage sites of [Northern Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Europe).[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-25) Visitors can climb 533 stone steps of the spiral staircase to a viewing platform about 100 m (330 ft) above the ground.[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-26) The platform gives a scenic view over the [Rhine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhine).

There is ongoing conservation at the cathedral to address the problem of the black discoloration caused by the sandstone reacting with sulfuric acid during rainfall. The acidic rain is a consequence of air pollution.[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-27)

[St. Joseph's Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Joseph%27s_Catholic_Church_(Washington,_D.C.)) in [Washington, D.C.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington,_D.C.) was modeled after the cathedral.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-cathstan-28)

Architecture[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=8" \o "Edit section: Architecture)]

See also: [Finials of Cologne Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finials_of_Cologne_Cathedral)

The design of Cologne Cathedral was based quite closely on that of [Amiens Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amiens_Cathedral) in terms of ground plan, style and the width to height proportion of the central nave. The plan is in the shape of a [Latin Cross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_Cross), as is usual with Gothic cathedrals. It has two aisles on either side, which help to support one of the very highest Gothic vaults in the world, being nearly as tall as that of the [Beauvais Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beauvais_Cathedral), much of which collapsed. Externally the outward thrust of the vault is taken by [flying buttresses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flying_buttress) in the French manner. The eastern end has a single ambulatory, the second aisle resolving into a *[chevet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chevet" \o "Chevet)* of seven radiating chapels.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

Internally, the medieval choir is more varied and less mechanical in its details than the 19th-century building. It presents a French style arrangement of very tall [arcade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arcade_(architecture)), a delicate narrow [triforium](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triforium" \o "Triforium) gallery lit by windows and with detailed tracery merging with that of the windows above. The [clerestory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clerestory) windows are tall and retain some old figurative glass in the lower sections. The whole is united by the tall shafts that sweep unbroken from the floor to their capitals at the spring of the vault. The vault is of plain quadripartite arrangement.

The choir retains a great many of its original fittings, including the carved stalls, which is made the more surprising by the fact that French Revolutionary troops had desecrated the building. A large stone statue of [St Christopher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Christopher) looks down towards the place where the earlier entrance to the cathedral was, before its completion in the late 19th century.

The nave has many 19th century stained glass windows. A set of five on the south side, called the *Bayernfenster*, were a gift from [Ludwig I of Bavaria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig_I_of_Bavaria), and strongly represent the painterly German style of that date.

Externally, particularly from a distance, the building is dominated by its huge spires, which are entirely Germanic in character, being openwork like those of [Ulm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulm_Minster), [Vienna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Stephen%27s_Cathedral,_Vienna), [Strasbourg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strasbourg_cathedral) and [Regensburg Cathedrals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regensburg_Cathedral).[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-29)

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cologne_cathedral_aerial_(25326253726).jpg)

A "Bird's eye view" shows the cruciform plan

* [](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cologne_cathedrale_vue_sud.jpg)

The cathedral from the south

**FACTS:**

**Bells**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cologne_Cathedral&action=edit&section=12)]

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CologneCathedralBell02.jpg)

[*Petersglocke*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersglocke); a person stands to the right of bell clapper

The cathedral has eleven church bells, four of which are medieval. The first was the 3.8-tonne *Dreikönigsglocke* ("Bell of the Three Kings"), cast in 1418, installed in 1437, and recast in 1880. Two of the other bells, the *Pretiosa* (10.5 tonnes; at that time the largest bell in the [Western world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_world)) and the *Speciosa* (5.6 tonnes) were installed in 1448 and remain in place today.

During the 19th century, as the building neared completion, there was a desire to increase the number of bells. This was facilitated by Kaiser Wilhelm I who gave [French bronze](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Bronze) cannon, captured in 1870–71, for this purpose. The 22 pieces of artillery were displayed outside the cathedral on 11 May 1872. Andreas Hamm in [Frankenthal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankenthal" \o "Frankenthal) used them to cast a bell of over 27,000 kilos on 19 August 1873. The tone was not harmonious and another attempt was made on 13 November 1873. The Central Cathedral Association, which had agreed to take over the costs, did not want this bell either. Another attempt took place on 3 October 1874. The colossal bell was shipped to Cologne and on 13 May 1875, installed in the cathedral. This *Kaiserglocke* was eventually melted in 1918 to support the German war effort. The Kaiserglocke was the largest free-swinging bell in history.

The 24-tonne [*St. Petersglocke*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersglocke) ("Bell of St. Peter", "*Decke Pitter*" in the [Kölsch language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colognian_language" \o "Colognian language) or in common parlance known as "*Dicker Pitter*"), was cast in 1922 and was the largest free-swinging bell in the world, until a new bell was cast in Innsbruck for the People's Salvation Cathedral in Bucharest in Romania.[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-36)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cologne Cathedral** | |
| * **Hohe Domkirche St. Petrus** * **Kölner Dom** | |
| [Kölner Dom von Osten.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:K%C3%B6lner_Dom_von_Osten.jpg)  Cologne Cathedral from the east | |
| [[https://maps.wikimedia.org/img/osm-intl,13,50.94129,6.95817,270x200.png?lang=en&domain=en.wikipedia.org&title=Cologne+Cathedral&groups=_40041acde8e811b09648609ffe45fd2b617724bd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#/map/0)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral" \l "/map/0)  [Wikimedia](https://foundation.wikimedia.org/wiki/Maps_Terms_of_Use) | © [OpenStreetMap](https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright) | |
| [Coordinates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system): https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/55/WMA_button2b.png/17px-WMA_button2b.png[50°56′29″N 6°57′29″E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Cologne_Cathedral&params=50.94129_N_6.95817_E_region:DE-NW_type:landmark) | |
| **Location** | [Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne) |
| **Country** | [Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany) |
| [**Denomination**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_denomination) | [Roman Catholic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) |
| **Website** | [koelner-dom.de](https://www.koelner-dom.de/home.html) |
| **History** | |
| **Status** | [Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral) |
| [**Dedication**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dedication) | [Saint Peter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Peter) |
| **Architecture** | |
| **Functional status** | Active |
| [**Style**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacred_architecture) | [Gothic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture) |
| **Years built** | 1248–1560 1842–1880 1950s–present (restoration) |
| **Specifications** | |
| **Length** | 144.5 metres (474 ft)[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-facts-1) |
| **Width** | 86.25 m (283.0 ft)[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-facts-1) |
| **Number of**[**spires**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spire) | 2 |
| **Spire height** | 157 m (515 ft)[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#cite_note-facts-1) |
| **Bells** | 11 |
| **Administration** | |
| [**Archdiocese**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese) | [Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Cologne) |
| [**Province**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecclesiastical_province) | [Cologne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Catholic_dioceses_in_Germany#Ecclesiastical_province_of_Cologne) |
| **Clergy** | |
| [**Provost**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provost_(religion)) | Guido Assmann[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral" \l "cite_note-2) |
| [**Vice-provost**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provost_(religion)) | Robert Kleine |
| [**Vicar(s)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicar) | Jörg Stockem |
| **Laity** | |
| [**Director of music**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_director) | Eberhard Metternich |
| [**Organist(s)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organist) | [Prof. Dr. Winfried Bönig](http://koelner-dommusik.de/index.php/de/domorgeln/domorganisten/boenig) |
| [**Organ scholar**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organ_scholar) | Ulrich Brüggemann |
| **Building details** | |
| [[https://maps.wikimedia.org/img/osm-intl,13,a,a,250x200.png?lang=en&domain=en.wikipedia.org&title=Cologne+Cathedral&groups=_1dc9fc0d83ae3ef21ed72a60d2cc1d5d25459e25](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#/map/1)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral" \l "/map/1)  [Wikimedia](https://foundation.wikimedia.org/wiki/Maps_Terms_of_Use) | © [OpenStreetMap](https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright) | |
| **Record height** | |
| Tallest in the world from 1880 to 1890[[I]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne_Cathedral#endnote_talleststatus) | |
| **Preceded by** | [Rouen Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rouen_Cathedral) |
| **Surpassed by** | [Ulm Minster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulm_Minster) |
| **Height** | |
| **Antenna spire** | 157.4 m (516 ft) |
| [**UNESCO World Heritage Site**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) | |
| [**Criteria**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_Site#Selection_criteria) | Cultural: i, ii, iv |
| **Reference** | [292](https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/292) |
| **Inscription** | 1996 (20th [Session](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_Committee)) |
| [**Endangered**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_World_Heritage_in_Danger) | 2004–06 |