

Exploring Your World

Journey to London



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Location

London is the capital of the United Kingdom. London is in England, which is part of the United Kingdom. London is the largest city in England, with over 8 million people living there. It is located near a river called the Thames. Many people visit London for work and entertainment.



A crown in front of the United Kingdom's flag

The Monarchy

England is part of the United Kingdom's **constitutional monarchy**. The **monarch** is a king or queen. The king or queen usually represents the kingdom during formal ceremonies in both England and around the world. Since the monarch represents the entire kingdom, he or she normally doesn't take sides when there are political disagreements.



The Changing of the Guard
outside Buckingham Palace

Buckingham Palace

One of London's most famous **landmarks** is Buckingham Palace. Buckingham Palace is where the monarch and the rest of the royal family live and conduct business. The royal family also entertains guests at the palace with parties and dances. Foot guards stand guard outside to protect the palace. They wear red jackets and furry hats called bearskins. People like to visit the palace to watch the Changing of the Guard.



Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey is well known as one of the most beautiful churches in the world. Most kings and queens of England were crowned at Westminster Abbey. Royal weddings and funerals usually occur there as well. People come to visit Westminster Abbey because of its beauty and history.



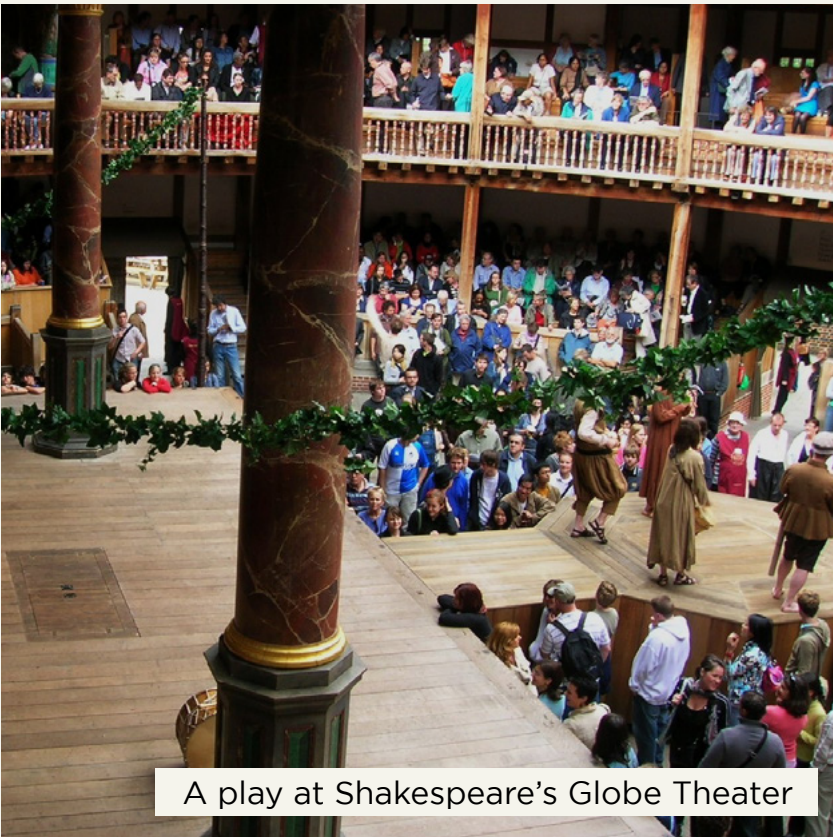
Big Ben

Another famous place to visit in London is the clock tower known as Big Ben. An interesting fact is that although most people call the clock Big Ben, it is actually a large bell inside the clock that is named Big Ben and not the tower itself. Big Ben is the largest chiming clock in the world and is one of London's most recognized **icons**.



Transportation

People travel around London on an underground railroad that people call the Tube. The Tube is the oldest underground train system in the world, with tunnels that span over 250 miles. Another popular form of transportation is the bus system. London is known for its red, double-decker buses. Riding double-decker buses is one of the best ways to see the sights and landmarks of London.



A play at Shakespeare's Globe Theater

The Globe Theater

William Shakespeare was a famous **playwright** who lived and worked in London. In 1599, his company built a theater called The Globe, and all of his plays were performed there. In 1997, a new theater, called Shakespeare's Globe Theater, was built to look just like the original Globe. In the new theater, people can still see Shakespeare's original plays as well as the plays of newer playwrights.



Famous People

There are many famous or well-known people who **reside** in London. J.K. Rowling, the author of the *Harry Potter* series, has spent time living in and around London. David Beckham, a famous professional soccer player, also lives in London. Many other famous people own homes in London because it is considered a beautiful and exciting city.



Football in London

Sports

Visitors to London can catch a football game at one of its many football stadiums. Football in England is actually played like soccer and not like the game of football in America. Another popular sport in London is tennis. The oldest tennis tournament, called the Wimbledon Tennis Championship, is played in London every year. American tennis players Venus and Serena Williams have both played in the Wimbledon Championship in past years.



A view of London at sunset

Conclusion

London is a bustling city that is regularly visited for both business and entertainment. From its beautiful buildings, to its rich history, to its famous landmarks, there is something for everyone.

Glossary:

constitutional monarchy (n): a system of government (p. 2)
where a king or queen rules a country, but whose
power is limited by a constitution

icons (n): things that symbolize people or places (p. 5)

landmarks (n): objects or features that are easily (p. 3)
recognized

monarch (n): a head of state such as a king or queen (p. 2)

playwright (n): a person who writes plays (p. 7)

reside (v): to live in a place (p. 8)

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