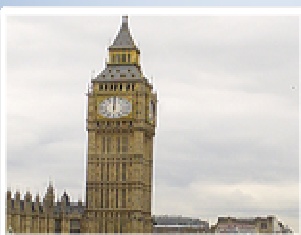


LONDON

London is the capital of the **United Kingdom** and the Constituent Country of **England**, and is the largest city in the European Union. London is one of the world's most important business, financial, and cultural centres and its influence in politics, education, entertainment, media, fashion and the arts contributes to its status as a major global city. Central London is the headquarters of more than half of the UK's top 100 listed companies and more than 100 of Europe's 500 largest companies. The city is a major tourist destination for both domestic and overseas visitors. London hosted the 1908 and 1948 Summer Olympic Games and will host the 2012 Summer Olympic Games.



Buckingham Palace is the official London residence of the **British monarch**. Located in the City of Westminster, the palace is a setting for state occasions and royal hospitality, and a major tourist attraction. It has been a rallying point for the British people at times of national rejoicing and crisis.



The Palace of Westminster, also known as the Houses of Parliament or Westminster Palace is where the two Houses of the Parliament of the United Kingdom (the House of Lords and the House of Commons) meet. The palace lies on the north bank of the **River Thames** in the London borough of the City of Westminster, close to the government buildings of Whitehall. The palace contains around 1,100 rooms, 100 staircases and 3 miles (5 km) of corridors. Although the building mainly dates from the

19th century, remaining elements of the original historic buildings include Westminster Hall, used today for major public ceremonial events such as lying in state, and the **Jewel Tower**.

Westminster Abbey is a large, mainly Gothic church, in Westminster, just to the west of the Palace of Westminster. It is the traditional place of coronation and burial site for English, later British and later still (and currently) monarchs of the Commonwealth Realms. It briefly held the status of a cathedral from 1546–1556, and is currently a Royal Peculiar.

The Tower of London, Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress, is a historic monument in central London, on the north bank of the **River Thames**. It is located within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and is separated from the eastern edge of the City of London by the open space known as Tower Hill.

Number 10 Downing Street is the residence and office of the First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Number 10, as it is often known, is perhaps the most famous address in London and one of the most widely recognised houses in the world.

Trafalgar Square is a square in central London. With its position in the heart of the city, it is a tourist attraction; at its centre is **Nelson's Column** which stands guarded by four lion statues at its base. Statues and sculptures are on display in the square, including a fourth plinth displaying changing pieces of contemporary art, and it is a site of political demonstrations. The name commemorates the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), a **British** naval victory of the Napoleonic Wars. The original name was to have been "King William the Fourth's Square", but George Ledwell Taylor suggested the name "Trafalgar Square".

Piccadilly Circus is a famous road junction and public space of London's West End in the City of Westminster, built in 1819 to connect Regent Street with the major shopping street of Piccadilly. In this context a circus, from the Latin word meaning a circle, is a circular open space at a street junction. The Circus is particularly known for its video display and neon signs mounted on the corner building on the northern side, as well as the Shaftesbury memorial fountain and statue of an archer popularly known as Eros.

Notting Hill is an area in West London close to the north-western corner of **Hyde Park**, and lying within the Royal Borough of Kensington and **Chelsea**. It is a cosmopolitan district known for being home to the Portobello Road Market. Notting Hill has a contemporary reputation as an affluent and fashionable area, known for attractive terraces of large Victorian townhouses, and high-class shopping and restaurants (particularly around Westbourne Grove and Clarendon Cross).

Hyde Park is one of the largest parks in central London and one of the Royal Parks of London, famous for its **Speakers' Corner**. The park is divided in two by the Serpentine. The park is contiguous with Kensington Gardens.

Covent Garden is a district in London, located in the easternmost parts of the City of Westminster and the southwestern corner of the London Borough of Camden. The area is dominated by shopping, street performers, and entertainment facilities, and it contains an entrance to the Royal Opera House, which is also widely-known simply as "Covent Garden".

Madame Tussauds is a famous wax museum in London with branches in a number of major cities. It was set up by wax sculptor Marie Tussaud.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Tourism Office

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