

King Henry VIII



Remembered as one of the most famous monarchs in history, Henry VIII is probably most known for his many wives and his incredibly bad temper. In fact, Henry is responsible for significant changes in England and across Europe.



Childhood

Henry was born on 28th June 1491 in London. He was the second son born to King Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. His older brother, Arthur, was born five years earlier and Henry was second in line to the English throne. As well as a brother, Henry had two sisters; Margaret, who was two years older, and Mary, who was born five years after Henry.



In 1502, Arthur died at only 15 years old. This meant that Henry, at only ten years old, was heir to the throne. His father kept him well supervised and he had very little training as to what a king's role involved.

Henry VII died on 21st April 1509, and 17-year-old Henry was crowned. Soon after, Henry married his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon.

Church of England

Henry wanted a son to carry on his legacy. As Catherine had only given him a daughter, Henry decided to divorce her and find another wife. In 1525, he fell in love with Anne Boleyn, one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting and chose her to be his next queen. However, the head of the Catholic Church, the Pope, would not allow him to divorce. This made Henry furious, so much so that he decided to break England away from the Catholic Church and create the Church of England, of which he would be the head. This was known as the English Reformation and sent shockwaves throughout Europe.

Did You Know...?

Henry VIII was also an author and composer. He also enjoyed jousting and playing tennis.



Did You Know...?

Henry VIII is thought of as the 'father of the British Navy'. During his reign, he ordered hundreds of new warships to be built and increased the strength of England's armies on the seas.



Henry's Six Wives

Henry is most famous for having six wives. They are:

 Catherine of Aragon	Married 11 th June 1509. Had one daughter, Mary. Died 7 th January 1536 aged 50.	Divorced
 Anne Boleyn	Married 25 th January 1533. Had one daughter, Elizabeth. Executed 19 th May 1536 aged 35.	Beheaded
 Jane Seymour	Married 30 th May 1536. Had one son, Edward. Died 24 th October 1537 aged 28.	Died after childbirth
 Anne of Cleves	Married 6 th January 1540. Had no children. Died 16 th July 1557 aged 42.	Divorced
 Catherine Howard	Married 28 th July 1540. Had no children. Executed 13 th February 1542 aged 19.	Beheaded
 Catherine Parr	Married 12 th July 1543. Had no children with Henry. Died 5 th September 1548 aged 36.	Outlived King Henry VIII

Death

Henry began to grow frailer due to his weight and many leg ulcers and, in 1547, Henry died at the age of 55. His son, Edward, succeeded him as King. Henry requested to be buried next to his third wife, Jane Seymour, who had given him the son he had so long desired.

