

THE BRITISH ISLES

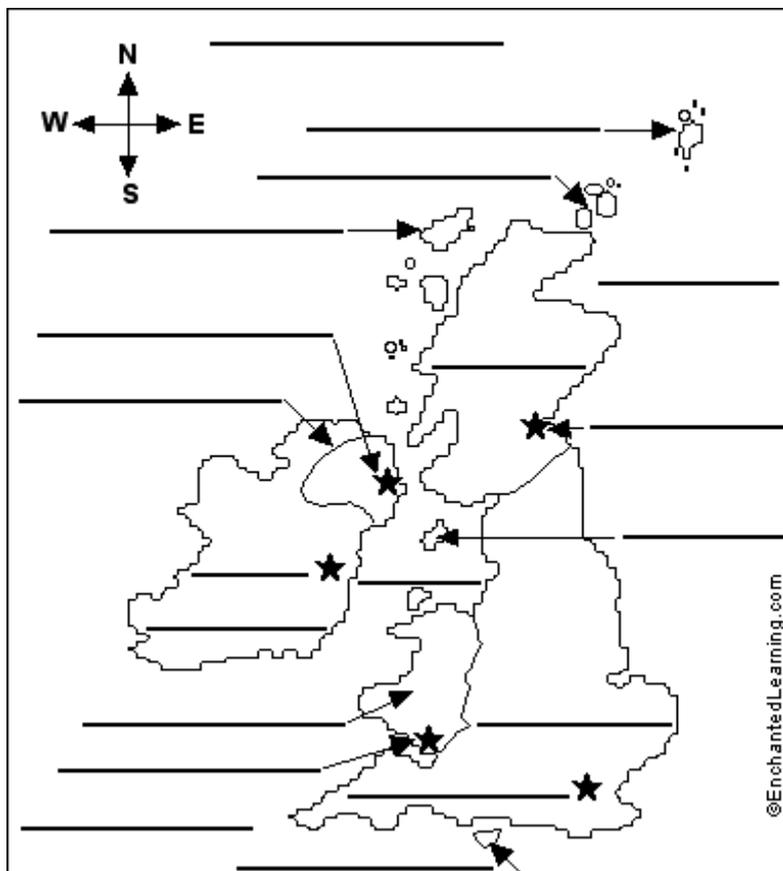
THE UK consists of England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

GREAT BRITAIN consists of England, Scotland, Wales

THE BRITISH ISLES are a group of islands that include Great Britain, Ireland and numerous smaller islands

	people	language	capital city	patron	symbol
ENGLAND	English	English	London	St. George	Red rose
SCOTLAND	Scottish	Scottish	Edinburgh	St. Andrew	Thistle (oset)
WALES	Welsh	Welsh	Cardiff	St. David	Leek and the daffodil
NORTHERN IRELAND (Ulster)	Irish	Irish	Belfast	St. Patrick	Shamrock and harp

The capital of **Ireland** (Eire) is **Dublin**



Atlantic Ocean - the body of water in which the British Isles are located

Belfast - the capital of Northern Ireland

Cardiff - the capital of Wales

Celtic Sea - the sea south of Ireland

Dublin - the capital of Ireland

England - the largest area in the United Kingdom; it is attached to Scotland and Wales

Edinburgh - the capital of Scotland

English Channel - the body of water off southern England which separates it from France

Hebrides - islands off the northwest coast of Scotland

Ireland - (the Republic of Ireland) - a country west of England across the Irish Sea (not part of the United Kingdom)

Irish Sea - the body of water that separates England and Ireland

Isle of Man - an island in the Irish Sea

Isle of Wight - an island off the southern coast of England

London - the capital of England (and the

capital of the United Kingdom)

North Sea - the body of water northeast of the British Isles separating it from northwestern Europe

Northern Ireland - a part of the United Kingdom bordering the Republic of Ireland on the northeast

Orkney Islands - islands off the northeast coast of Scotland

Scotland - a part of the United Kingdom bordering England on the north

Shetland Islands - islands far off the northeast coast of Scotland

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland –general information

AREA: 244,820 km²

POPULATION: 62,041,708

POLITICAL SYSTEM: Parliamentary Monarchy

PARLIAMENT: House of Lords / Izba Lordów/ (upper house) + House of Commons/ Izba Gmin/ (lower house)

MONARCH: Elizabeth II

PRIME MINISTER: Theresa May (since 13 July 2016)

CAPITAL: London

FLAG: 'Union Jack' – consists of the red Cross of Saint George (patron saint of England), the Cross of St Patrick (patron saint of Ireland) and the Cross of Saint Andrew (patron saint of Scotland).

NATIONAL ANTHEM: 'God Save the Queen' (alternatively 'God Save the King', depending on the monarch).

COAT OF ARMS: The Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom (official coat of arms of Queen Elizabeth II) The coat features the **motto** of English monarchs, 'Dieu et mon droit' (**God and my right**).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

RECOGNISED OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Irish, Ulster Scots, Scottish Gaelic, Scots, Welsh, Cornish

LARGEST CITY: London

LONGEST RIVER: Severn (354 km)

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN PEAK: **Ben Nevis** (1,344 metres)

The Queen's Home in London is Buckingham Palace.

The Prime Minister lives in 10 Downing Street

Main political parties:

Conservative Party- Partia Konserwatystów

Labour Party- Partia Pracy

Liberal Democrat

Festivals and holidays:

St. Patrick's Day (17th March) national holiday in Ireland (św.narodowe)

Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday) Dzień Naleśnika (inna nazwa dnia poprzedzającego Środę Popielcową)

Guy Fawkes Night / Bonfire Night (5th November)-celebrated in memory of Guy Fawkes who on 5th Nov 1605 planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London

St.Valentine's Day (14thFebruary)

Halloween / All Hallows Eve (31st October) –Wigilia Wszystkich Świętych

Edinburgh Festival- a festival of music and drama (muzyki i dramatu) held every summer

Hyde Park – one of the largest parks in central London, includes the Speakers' Corner

Windsor Castle – the largest inhabited castle in the world, one of the residences of the British Queen

History of Great Britain:

1066 – William the Conqueror wins the battle of Hastings.

1534 – Henry VIII decides to separate England from the Catholic Church.

1653 – After a civil war, Oliver Cromwell becomes the Lord Protector.

1733 – The Industrial Revolution starts as a result of the invention of the steam engine.

after World War II – The country loses its position of a global empire.

SYMBOLS

Big Ben

Over the years, this imposing clock tower has turned into a significant symbol of the UK. Probably the largest four-faced clock in existence, Big Ben celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2009. At first, it was the enormous bell within the tower that does the chiming that was dubbed 'Big Ben,' however, gradually the name was extended to the clock and eventually the whole tower. The building often makes an appearance in the media, and whenever a film's action takes place in London, it has to appear in the shot.

to see sth in one's mind's eye – widzieć coś oczyma duszy
irrevocably – nieodwołalnie
imposing – imponujący, olśniewający
to turn into – zmienić się w
significant – znaczący
four-faced – tu: skierowany na cztery strony świata
in existence – istniejący
anniversary – rocznica
enormous – ogromny, olbrzymi
chime – kurant, dzwonenie
dubbed – ochrzczony (mianem), nazwany
gradually – stopniowo
to make an appearance – pojawiać się (gdzieś), wystąpić (np. publicznie)
shot – ujęcie

Foot Guards

Foot Guards belong to the Queen's Guard. Attired in red jackets and tall, furry, black bearskin hats, they carry out their duties and uphold the traditions and ceremonies of the past. 45.7 cm-tall and weighing about 0.7 kg, the bearskins make the guards look more intimidating and much taller. These massive hats are made of bearskin from brown bears, which reside in Canada. Why the weird headgear? Bearskins were worn in 1815 by British soldiers after the battle of Waterloo, however they had first been worn by French grenadiers. As a symbol of their triumph over the much despised enemy, the British took over the custom of wearing the imposing headwear. Hence, nowadays, these enormous hats adorn the heads of soldiers of the Queen's Guard during their ceremonial duties. There is a common misconception that the Queen's Guards have to stand stock-still while on duty. In fact, during their two-hour-long watch, they remain immobile for about ten minutes, and then they resume their regular measured pacing up and down in front of the sentry box.

foot guards – gwardia piesza
to attire – odziewać się
bearskin hat – bermyca (niedźwiedzia czapka)
to carry out sb's duties – wykonywać czyjeś zadania/obowiązki
to uphold the traditions – stać na straży tradycji
intimidating – przerażający
to reside – przebywać, mieszkać
weird – dziwny
headgear – nakrycie głowy
battle – bitwa

despised – pogardzany
custom – zwyczaj
to adorn – ozdobić, przystroić
misconception – błędne przekonanie
stock-still – bez ruchu
on duty – na służbie
watch – czaty, warta
to remain immobile – pozostawać w bezruchu
to pace up and down – chodzić tam i z powrotem
sentry box – posterunek wartowniczy

Afternoon Tea

Traditionally, afternoon tea is served at 4 o'clock, and comprises of tea or coffee served along with a small snack:

- cucumber sandwiches with the crusts cut off
- pastries, or
- fresh scones with cream and jam

Although nowadays many people cannot partake in this traditional custom, as they are still at work, one may still enjoy an afternoon tea in one of the many tea rooms available in the country.

to comprise of – składać się z
snack – przekąska
to cut off the crusts – obciąć skórkę (chleba)
pastry – ciastko
scone – babeczka
to partake in sth – uczestniczyć
w czymś, brać w czymś udział

Red double-decker buses, black cabs, red telephone boxes

These are iconic images found on the streets of London, and as such, they tend to appear frequently on souvenirs from the UK. Although doubledeckers are not such an infrequent sight in other parts of the world, the red double-deck vehicles have become a national symbol of Britain. They are relatively short (9-11 m) and just above 4 m high. A ride in a double-decker is one of the major tourist attractions when in the UK.

Black cabs (also called hackney cabs) are another means of transport associated with London, and the UK. They are usually black in London and in other major cities of the UK, although there are more and more cabs which sport brand liveries. In order to become a driver of a London black cab, you have to pass 'The Knowledge,' a special test that checks your knowledge of London streets and important sites.

Red telephone boxes – it's impossible not to spot them when doing a tour of the UK. The most common type of red booth is called K6, which was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott for the commemoration of the silver jubilee of King George V. Although initially criticised for their garish colour, especially in areas of architectural merit and exceptional beauty, now they are a much loved and admired icon of 'Britishness.'

double-decker – autobus piętrowy, piętrus
souvenir – suvenir, pamiątka
infrequent – nieczęsty
vehicle – pojazd
hackney cab – dorożka, fiakier

to sport – nosić, paradować (w czymś)
to pass – zdać (np. egzamin)
site – teren, miejsce
booth – kabina, budka
commemoration – obchody
jubilee – jubileusz
garish – jaskrawy, krzykliwy
merit – wartość, zaleta
admired – podziwiany

Monty Python

Broadcast between 1969 and 1974 and spanning over forty episodes in the series, the famous 'Monty Python's Flying Circus' was a British comedy sketch aired on the BBC. Its authors, among whom were such well-known comedy actors as John Cleese, called themselves the Pythons. The series became so popular that it developed into stage shows, books, films and even a stage musical. Many of the sketches, such as 'Dead Parrot,' 'The Spanish Inquisition,' 'Nudge Nudge' and 'Cheese Shop,' are old favourites and are often quoted.

to broadcast – nadawać
to span – trwać
aired – wyświetlony, nadawany
stage show – inscenizacja
nudge, nudge – porozumiewawcze znaki

Separate hot and cold water taps

To the British it's natural, normal and they don't understand what all the fuss is about. To foreigners, though, the unusual separate hot and cold water taps solution seems an unnecessary eccentricity, and it is, well, slightly annoying. If you want to wash your hands you either do it using cold water tap, or you put a plug in and mix a bit of cold and hot water in the sink. Some find it less hygienic than washing your hands under running water. However, the British have remained unflinching in their stance, and even when renovating and redecorating old houses and apartments, they stick by the double-tap system.

Shamrock

The shamrock, a plant with three leaves similar to clover, is the national emblem of Ireland. It is also connected with the celebrations of St Patrick's Day on the 17th of March. There is a commonly held belief that St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, used this plant to explain the notion of the Trinity, the idea of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost being separate and yet forming a single entity. Over the years, the custom of wearing a shamrock on St Patrick's day has been adopted, and many businesses and organisations use this symbol to accentuate their ties with the Emerald Isle.

Leprechaun

A leprechaun is a kind of Irish fairy or sprite, commonly believed to be clad in green colours, with a red, bushy beard, portly, with rosy cheeks and small mischievous eyes. His main occupation is shoe-making. When not busy, he whiles the time away sitting by the end of the rainbow next to his hidden pot, counting his gold. If you're lucky enough to catch him, he will have to grant you three wishes in exchange for his release.

shamrock – koniczynka
clover – koniczyna
emblem – godło, emblemat
commonly held belief – w powszechnym przekonaniu
the Trinity – Trójca
Holy Ghost – Duch Święty
to form – tworzyć, współtworzyć
entity – istota
to accentuate – uwydatnić, podkreślić
ties to/with sth – powiązania z czymś
leprechaun – krasnal (folklor irlandzki)
fairy – duszek
sprite – duszek, chochlik
clad in sth – odziany w coś
portly – korpulentny, tęgi
rosy – różowy
mischievous – swawolny, psotny
to while away – skrócić czas, umilać sobie (czas np. oczekiwania)
pot – garniec
to grant – przyznać, uznać
release – uwolnienie
tap – kran
fuss – zamieszanie, bałagan
solution – rozwiązanie
eccentricity – ekscentryczność, dziwactwo
plug – zatyczka, korek
running water – woda bieżąca
unflinching – nieugięty, niezachwiany
stance – podejście, stanowisko
to stick by sth – trzymać się czegoś

Źródło:

'English Matters' – Magazan dla uczących się j.angielskiego (wydanie specjalne)

Wikipedia