

Did you know?

- Anglo-Saxons liked playing board games. The dice were mostly made from deer antlers, although bone, walrus ivory and jet were also used.
- The Anglo-Saxons are believed to have eaten lots of bread, which was served with almost every meal. Bread was made from wheat, rye or mixtures of rye and barley. In bad harvests, acorns and beans would be added to the grains to make coarse bread.
- A certain kind of tree fungus is called 'cramp balls' or 'King Alfred's cakes' because it is black, crinkly and looks burnt!
- Early Anglo-Saxons lived in tribes, with a leader who was selected for his strength. The leader remained in place until defeated by a challenger.
- Alfred the Great founded the Royal Navy in the 9th century.
- 'Grim' was a popular boy's name in the Viking Age! Viking children didn't have surnames. Instead, their second name was their father's name with 'son' or 'daughter' joined on to it.
- The word Viking means 'a pirate raid' in the Old Norse language.
- Viking people often had nicknames that described their appearance or personality. Names of some real Viking kings are: Harald Fairhair, Olaf the Quiet, Hakon the Broad-Shouldered and Harald Bluetooth. One famous Viking woman was known as Aud the Deep-Minded!
- Viking warriors didn't wear horned helmets! The only authentic Viking helmet ever discovered is completely horn free. Artists seem to have made up the horned helmet idea during the 19th century.
- Ever wondered where the word 'berserk' comes from? 'Berserkers' was the name given to some terrifying Viking warriors who wore bear or wolf skins and howled in battle, like wild animals!
- Norsemen regarded skiing as an efficient way to get around and a popular form of recreation. They even worshipped a god of skiing, Ullr.
- Viking explorer, Eric the Red (also called Erik Thorvaldsson), found islands west of Iceland. He called this new land Greenland (even though it was covered with ice) to make it sound more pleasant and to encourage settlement! Tut, tut!
- Leg, sky, window, kid, skill and ugly are all words that originate from the Viking language, Old Norse.