

# Middle Ages Overview & Timeline

## What were the Middle Ages?

The Middle Ages, or Medieval Times occurred in Europe from the years 500-1500 AD. It covers the time from the fall of the Roman Empire to the rise of the Ottoman Empire. This time period had castles, peasants, guilds, monasteries, cathedrals, and crusades. There were many great leaders like Joan of Arc and Charlemagne. Some of the major events were the Black Plague and the rise of the religion of Islam..



## Other Names

This time period is often referred to as Medieval Times, the Middle Ages, or the Dark Ages. Usually people are referring to the same basic time period. The Dark Ages refers to the first half of the Middle Ages from about 500 to 1000 AD. After the Roman Empire fell, a lot of Roman culture and knowledge was lost including art, technology, engineering, and history. During the Roman Empire, Romans kept excellent records of everything that occurred, but the period afterward is “dark” to historians because there was no central government to record events that happened. Historians have coined this time period the “Dark Ages” because of this.

## Timeline

476	Fall of the Roman Empire; Rome had ruled much of Europe and now much of the land fell into confusion as local kings and rulers tried to take power; start of the Dark Ages or Middle Ages
481	Clovis became the King of the Franks; united most of the Frankish tribes part of the Roman Province of Gaul
570	Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, was born
732	Battle of Tours- Franks defeat the Muslims turning back Islam from Europe
800	Charlemagne, King of the Franks, crowned Holy Roman Emperor; united much of Western Europe and is considered the father of both the French and German Monarchies
835	Vikings from the Scandinavian lands (Denmark, Norway, and Sweden) begin to invade northern Europe; continued until 1042



896

Alfred the Great, King of England, turned back the Viking invaders

1066

William of Normandy, a French Duke, conquered England in the Battle of Hastings; Became King of England and changed the country forever

1096



Start of the First Crusade, wars between the Holy Roman Empire and the Muslims over the Holy Land; Several Crusades over the next 200 years

1189

Richard I, Richard the Lionheart, became King of England

1206

The Mongol Empire was founded by Genghis Khan

1215

King John of England signed the Magna Carta, giving the people some rights and said the king was not above the law

1271

Marco Polo left on his famous journey to explore Asia; Europeans were interested in his stories



1337

The Hundred Years War began between England and France for control of the French throne

1347



The Black Death began in Europe; horrible disease that ended up killing around half the people of Europe

1431

French heroine, Joan of Arc, executed by England at the age of 19

1444

German inventor, Johannes Gutenberg, invented the printing press, signals the start of the Renaissance



1453

Ottoman Empire captured the city of Constantinople; signaled the end of the Eastern Roman Empire, also known as Byzantium