

Early Islamic Civilisation

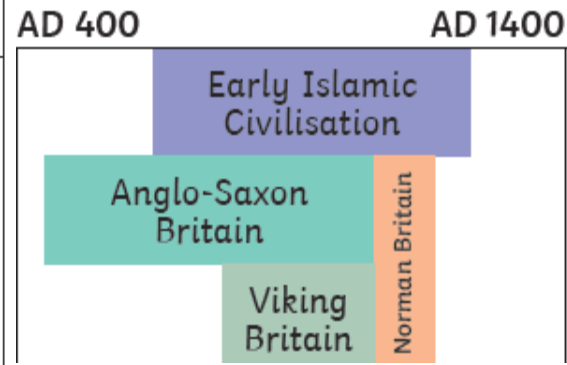
Key Dates

AD 632	Muhammad dies and Muslims struggle to agree who should be the next caliph . The first four caliphs appointed after this time come to represent an age of 'pure Islam '. When the last, Ali, was assassinated in AD 661, the Umayyad dynasty of caliphs took over for nearly a century. After that began the reign of the Abbasid caliphs .
AD 752	Caliph Al-Mansur builds Baghdad as the new capital of the Islamic empire on the river Tigris. It was close to established trade routes, such as the Silk Road , and became known as the cultural and learning capital of the world.
AD 830	The House of Wisdom is built in Baghdad.
AD 1000	Al-Zahrawi finishes his medical book Al Tasrif. It will be used by doctors for another 500 years.
AD 1258	The Siege of Baghdad. Mongols from Asia attacked Islamic lands, destroying the House of Wisdom and burning Baghdad. They threw millions of books into the river. The city never recovered its former glory, but the ideas lived on.

The House of Wisdom

Bayt al-Hikma, the 'House of Wisdom', was **founded by Caliph Harun al-Rashid**. He encouraged learning and invited scholars of **different faiths** to his court, treating them with great respect. **The House of Wisdom was a library and research facility** which collected and translated writing from many **cultures, including Persian, Indian ancient Greek and Roman texts**. **By AD 900, the House of Wisdom stored more books than anywhere else in the world** and was attracting the most brilliant minds to study there.

Timeline



Islamic Art

Islamic art includes **architecture, calligraphy, painted glass, illustrated patterns, pottery, and textile arts**.

Islamic Scholars and Their Achievements

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi AD 780 – AD 850	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Father of algebra' • Introduced Arabic numbers 1-9 and the concept of 'zero'
Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi AD 854 - AD 925	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment of smallpox and measles • Study of eyes • Recognised the importance of doctor/patient relationships
Abu al-Qasim Khalaf ibn al-Abbas al-Zahrawi AD 936 – AD 1013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New surgical techniques, e.g. cauterisation • New surgical tools, e.g. forceps
Ibn al-Haytham AD 965 – AD 1040	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proved that light travels in straight lines • Invented the first camera

Baghdad and Islamic Empire

Baghdad population: over a million

Millions of books, many thousands of readers.

Clean water and good drainage in cities.

Advanced mathematics used Arabic numbers and the concept of 'zero'.

General peace across a huge Islamic empire.

London and Europe

London population: approximately 20,000

Very few books, only very rich or educated people could read.

Very little drainage in cities, water supplies were unsafe.

Basic mathematics, with Roman numerals and no concept of 'zero'

Many wars between Christian kingdoms.