

All About Anglo-Saxon Gods



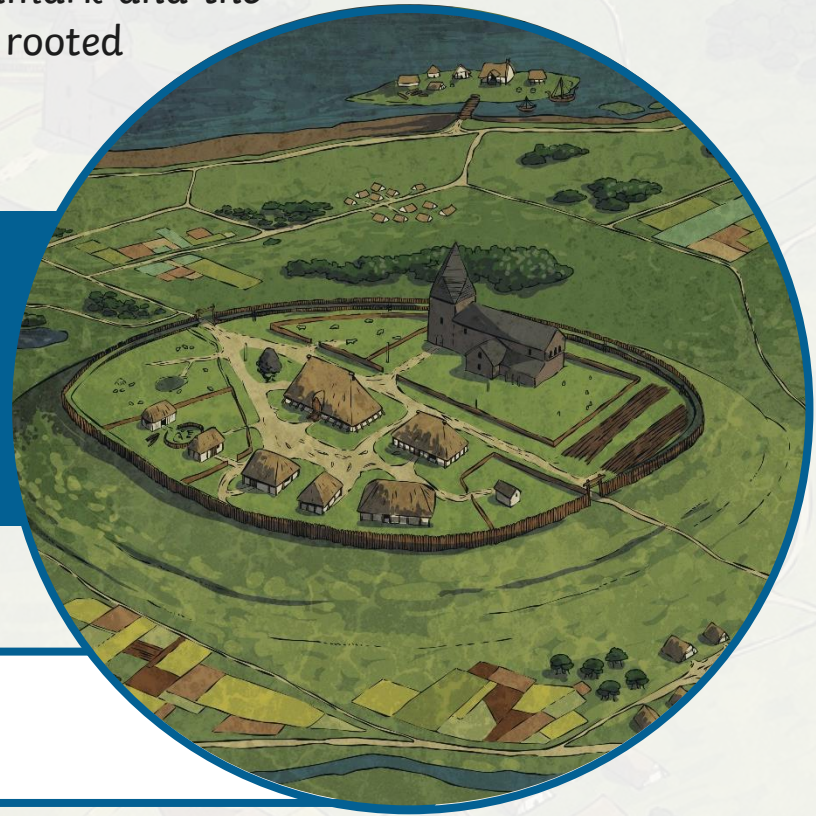
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Where Did the Anglo-Saxon Gods Come From?

After the Romans left Britain, the Anglo-Saxons (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) arrived across the North Sea from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands and with them came beliefs rooted in Norse mythology.

In the Norse legends, there were two groups of gods, whom the Anglo-Saxons called Ese and Wena. In time, Ese won over the Wena and the Ese became the rulers over the Wena.

The leader of the Ese, Woden, became King of all the gods.



Woden – King of the Gods

The Anglo-Saxons held the gods in such high esteem that four days of the week were named after them. These also link to how the Romans named the seven-day week.

Day	The Roman name	Roman meaning	The god after whom the Anglo Saxons named their days
Monday	dies Lunae	The Day of the Moon	
Tuesday	dies Martis	The Day of Mars	Tiw
Wednesday	dies Mercurii	The Day of Mercury	Woden
Thursday	dies Iovis	The Day of Jupiter	Thuner
Friday	dies Veneris	The Day of Venus	Frige
Saturday	dies Saturni	The Day of Saturn	
Sunday	dies Solis	The Day of The Sun	

Find out more: Look up the French words for days of the week, what you notice?

Meet the Gods

Click on a god or goddess to find out more about them.



[More Gods](#)

Woden – King of the Gods

Name: Woden

Nickname: Grim

Jobs: chief of the gods, god of war

Family: husband of Frige, father of Thunor and Bealdor

Sacred Animals: wolf, raven

Sacred Plant: ash tree

Equivalent Roman God: Mercury

Equivalent Norse God: Odin

Sacred Weapon: spear

Characteristics

Woden was sometimes shown with one eye, two pet wolves and a horse with eight legs.



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Frige – Goddess of the Home

Name: Frige

Jobs: goddess of the home, marriage, childbirth, Earth and harvest

Family: married to Woden, mother of Thunor and Bealdor

Sacred Animal: stork

Sacred Star Constellation: Orion's Belt

Sacred Tool: spinning wheel

Equivalent Norse God: Frigg (married to Odin)

Equivalent Roman God: Venus



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Thunor – God of Thunder

Name: Thunor

Job: god of storms, thunder and lightning

Family: son of Woden

Sacred Animal: goat

Sacred Plant: oak tree

Sacred Weapon: hammer

Equivalent Norse God: Thor

Equivalent Roman God: Jupiter

Characteristics

Thunor was often depicted on a chariot pulled by goats.



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Freo – Goddess of Love

Name: Freo

Job: goddess of love

Family: sister of Ingui

Sacred Animals: cat, boar

Equivalent Norse God: Freya

Equivalent Roman God: Venus

Characteristics

Freo wore a magic cloak of falcon feathers and a necklace called 'Brisingamen'.



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Eostre – Goddess of Spring

Name: Eostre

Job: goddess of spring, goddess of rebirth

Sacred Animal: hare

Sacred Symbol: egg

Equivalent Norse God: Austrá

Equivalent Roman God: Aurora

Special Month: April
(around where Easter is now)



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Tiw – God of War

Name: Tiw

Job: god of war, justice and a sky god

Sacred Animal: wolf

Equivalent Norse God: Tyr

Equivalent Roman God: Mars

Characteristics

Tiw was often shown as having only one hand.



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Bealdor – God of Light

Name: Bealdor

Job: god of light

Family: son of Woden and Frige

Equivalent Norse God: Baldr

Equivalent Roman God: Apollo

Characteristics

He gave off light from his good looks, generosity and goodness.



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Other Gods and Goddesses



Name: Hretha

Job: goddess of fame, goddess of war

Special Month: March

Places: The names of places beginning with Rad, Red or Read are probably after her.

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The Arrival of Christianity

The Romans did introduce Christianity to Britain but the Anglo-Saxons mainly kept their pagan beliefs.

Later, in AD 597 the pope in Rome sent a missionary (someone who promotes a religion in another country) to travel to Britain to spread the word of Christianity and help convert people to the religion.

This missionary was a monk named Augustine. He was successful in converting Ethelbert, the King of Kent, to Christianity and King Ethelbert even built Augustine a Church at Canterbury. Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury and the one named as the founder of the Church of England.



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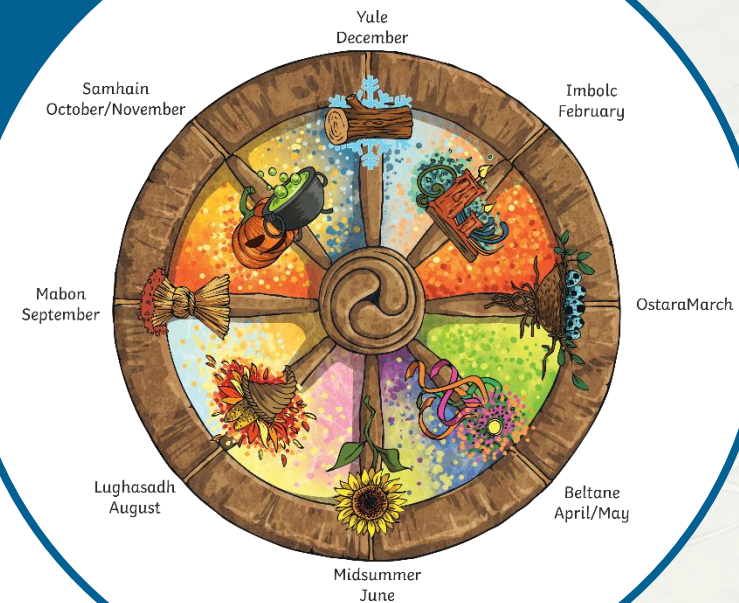
The Arrival of Christianity

The Anglo-Saxons, just like most communities and religions, celebrated festivals during the year.

Anglo-Saxon festivals align with similar Christian festivals and all fit with the changing seasons. Significant points in the year were the summer and winter solstices (near when we find Christmas) and Eostre in the springtime when things started to grow again – when Easter is now.

Find out more:

Look at this pagan 'wheel of the year' and see how it lines up with Christian festivals and the seasons.





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