

# Medieval castles

[History](#), [Middle Ages](#)



Castles of the Middle Ages In the 11th century, castles were served as the homes and fortresses of monarchs or nobles. They were also huge protection camps for the kings; they included every kind of defense known to medieval man. Anything from a moat, to murder holes, to arrow loops and this was all for the safety and protection of royalty. Overtime, the material used to build these castles improved by the matter of defense. Their purpose was extremely reasonable and a threat to many, but it was the private residence of a king, not only for his families, but his dependents as well.

Castles were built mainly on steep hills or even on cliffs, they were surrounded by wooden palisades and had many tactics of defense. With all of these strategies built into the castles, it was nearly impossible for enemies or intruders to trespass. However, castles weren't always built so sturdy, or such a great idea at that matter, they used to be made of wood and earth. When people realized how much easier it was for them to be destroyed simply by being burned to the ground, they were then upgraded to stone and led.

Castles were rarely made to be a comfortable place to live, since their purpose was for safety. The average castle had over 20 rooms, and not one was made for comfort. The Ground Floor usually was just the kitchen and the storage room, the first floor was usually known as The Great Hall used for celebrations and ballroom dances, and the top floors were occupied by the lord and his family members. The dungeon however, is the room most people are curious about. It was a room usually located underground under a tower.

This room was intended for keeping prisoners, and in the most extreme scenarios, used for torture. The reason for the location of the dungeon was because the screams and cries were hardly ever heard. The castles also contained small personal chapels but this was the only room that anybody was able to visit since the Medieval Christian Church took over the everyday lives and religious views of all people; its purpose was for prayer and asking god for forgiveness. These chapels were often built with a horizontally divided nave and were usually two stories high.

The nobles and dignitaries sat in the upper level and the servants would sit in the lower levels of the chapel. The chapel was possibly the most perfectly furnished, richly decorated, and colorful room in the building. Since the time spent on prayer was expected four times a day, the chapel was occupied upon rising, at noon, in the evening, and before bedtime. They also consisted of crystal-like windows, which each had a meaning or story to it. Whether it was an image of God, The Virgin Mary, or even just the angels in whom they believed were everywhere watching over them.

The outside of the castle wasn't so pretty however, it may have seemed nice and peaceful from the outside but it was quite a surprise for others who attempted to trespass. It all starts when the king or lord places 14-year-old boys under the supervision of knights so they can learn a thing or two about chivalry, how to defend themselves with a sword, how to ride the horses into the battles, and so forth; these along with watchmen, guards, knights, and a porter to open up the main door.

They each had their own positions and their own skills to rely on, some were trained crossbowmen, archers, lancers, and some just had swords to defend themselves. The castle guards had to spend all day in front of a castle and staying alert. Even though these castles were made of stone, there were still a couple of possibilities that the enemy could've destroyed at least a part of the castle if they intended to, but it was rarely accomplished considering how difficult it was.

Not only were courageous men securing the building, but they were even made in a way that it would force the attackers to spend more time and money trying to destroy it. The first line of defense toward an enemy and his crowd were the archers at the top of the castle. These men launched incendiary arrows with their bows, making the enemy's wooden catapults engulf in flames. Along with that, the second line of defense was the lancers. They were men, with a sword-like weapon, riding on their horses fighting through the opposing crowd going around the building, taking out those who were a threat to the castle.

Last but not least, the knights were the soldiers that were, most of the time, positioned at the front of the gate and drawbridge. Their weapons were usually swords and axes and their suits were made of armor, hence the reason they were strategically positioned near the gates in case of any attackers that got too close. There was a lot of effort and money put into these castles to get them to be almost indestructible and they were no doubt an important lifestyle to royalty. They were the palaces of the nobles and the

monarchs; they were a place for the kings family and dependents to feel safe and powerful.