

why did william the conqueror win the battle of hastings? essay sample

[History](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Battle of Hastings was fought on 14th October 1066 - between Harold Godwinson of England and William of Normandy. The conflict started because when King Edward died, he left no heir to inherit the crown, which left three men claiming to be the next King of England. These three contenders to the throne were Harold Godwinson who was the only Englishman and related to the old king by marriage, Harald Hadrada and William the Conqueror who was the only contender that was related to King Edward by blood.

The first argument as to why William won the Battle of Hastings is that he had the best army. The Normans had 7500 men, all fully trained compared to the 4500 voluntary village workers and only 500 professionally trained soldiers that made up Harold Godwinson's English army. William had many archers and slingshots, the Normans were also equipped with auxiliaries - blacksmiths, carpenters, medics and cooks - as well as a few mercenaries, who were professional soldiers that fought for whoever paid them the most amount of money.

William's men also had better armour and weapons, for example there is some evidence that archers used crossbows in addition to bows and arrows, were also used along with spears and swords, round shields and kite shaped shields. This meant that the Normans were more protected from the English, than the English were from them as well as having weapons that could do more damage. Another benefit that William had as one of his skills was that he was a very good commander of his troops and organised his men very well.

An additional point is that the battle began much sooner than Harold Godwinson and his army had expected, which meant that his troops were not properly ready. Less than a week before the Battle of Hastings, Harold Godwinson and the English were fighting in the north at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, where he lost some of his best fighters to the Norwegians and their leader Harald Hadrada. As well as this, the soldiers of Harold's that were remaining were very tired and weak after the tiresome battle at Stamford Bridge. On one hand there was the struggling English army who were not properly ready for the battle, and on the other there was the shiny polishing Norman army who had been preparing for this day and months. Obviously, this gave William the Conqueror a clear advantage over King Harold due mainly to Harold's misfortune and his poor leadership.

Another point is that a lot of people believe cost Harold Godwinson the Battle of Hastings, is the trick that the Normans very cleverly played on the English. This crafty trick was that he told his army to launch a surprise attack on the English army he said to retreat unexpectedly. Then just as William had predicted the inexperienced army came charging down the hill. Sneakily, the Normans made a quick turn and came charging at the English and killed them all. Amazingly, they did this two times to the English's dismay. The last point is that William was lucky because when he wanted to sail to England and his boat was in the ocean and luckily for him the wind changed so he could sail to England there was a bit of luck on Williams's side then Harold's.

In conclusion I think the most important reason that William won the battle of Hastings was that when the Normans used the strategy to retreat and then

turn and kill the English in the war. That was the turning point in the battle if they hadn't thought of that then anyone could have won and there was also some luck on Williams side. Harold wasn't prepared enough to win I personally think he had bad skills and management and picked up voluntary village farmers and other people that weren't even soldiers! Two points that are linked are that Harold didn't have enough weapons or experienced people to even fight in the war.