

# All About Anglo-Saxon Gods



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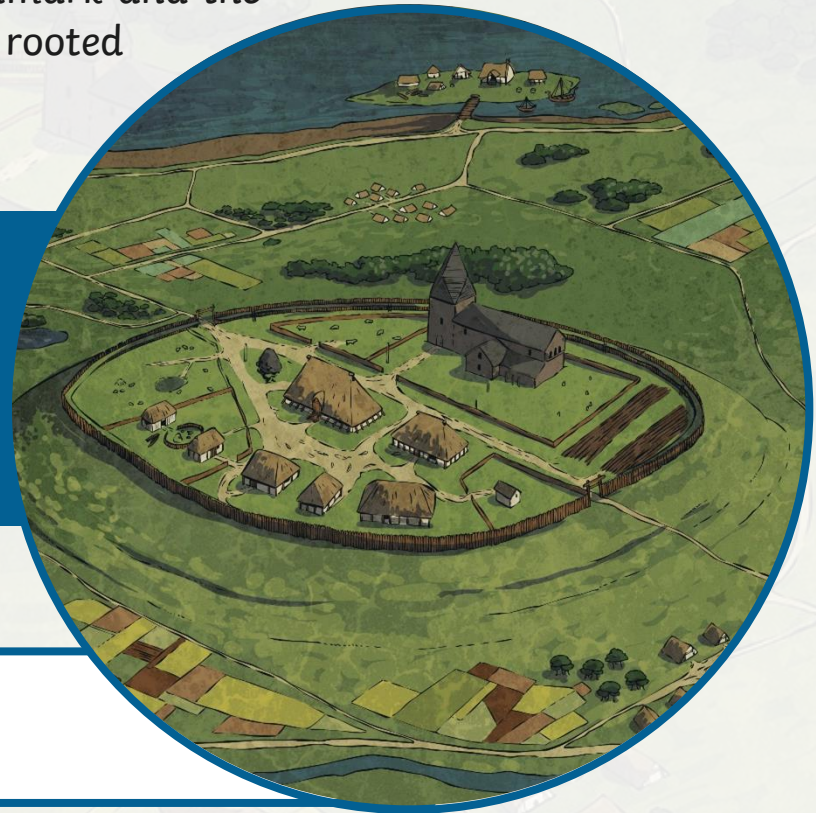


# Where Did the Anglo-Saxon Gods Come From?

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:** Austra

**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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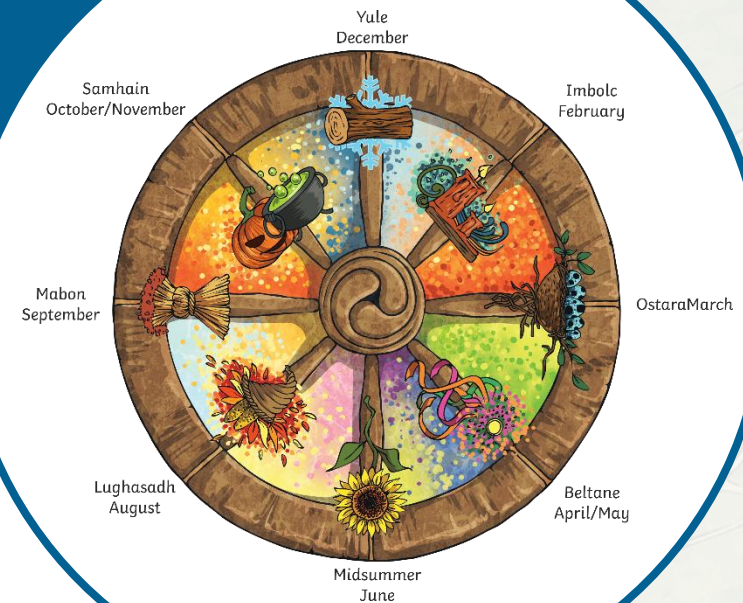
# The Arrival of Christianity

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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