

1491: Henry VIII born to Henry VII and Elizabeth of York at Greenwich Palace.

1509: Henry became Henry VIII, at the age of 17 following the death of his father, Henry VII. Henry VIII was a very different character to his father, but he inherited a real sense of the need to secure the throne. This was possibly as a result of the rather tumultuous route Henry VII followed to become King of England.



1509: On **7 June** Henry married Catherine of Aragon at Greenwich Palace.

Catherine was previously the wife of Henry's brother Arthur and she & Henry needed special dispensation from the pope in Rome to marry. Catherine was the daughter of the King and Queen of Spain, Isabella and Ferdinand, two very powerful European rulers. The marriage was certainly arranged to secure good international relationships.



1516: Catherine produced a daughter, Mary. However she did not provide Henry with an heir. It was very important to Henry that Mary should give



birth to a male child. Without a son to take over from him when he died, Henry feared that the

Tudor family would lose control of England. Catherine gave birth to six children but five died within a few weeks of being born. Only Mary survived into adulthood. By **1530** Catherine was too old to have any more children. Henry decided he needed another wife. His choice was Anne Boleyn.

Before he could marry Anne, Henry had to gain permission from Pope Clement VII. Henry sent a message to the Pope stating that his marriage to Catherine had been invalid as she had been married to his brother Arthur. When Catherine discovered this, she told her nephew King Charles V of Spain. Charles warned the Pope that he would be very angry if he granted the divorce. In an attempt to keep the peace, the Pope made no decision about Henry's marriage. Between 1527 and 1531 Henry tried repeatedly to annul his marriage. The church in England recognised Henry VIII as supreme head of the Church of England on 11 February 1531.

1533: In January 1533 [Henry VIII](#) discovered that [Anne Boleyn](#) was pregnant. It was important that if a son, he should not be classed as illegitimate. King Charles V of Spain threatened to invade England if the marriage took place, but Henry ignored this. In September 1533, Anne gave birth to [Elizabeth](#). New laws gave authority over church matters to the Archbishops of [Canterbury](#). This allowed [Thomas Cranmer](#), the new Archbishop of Canterbury, to issue Henry's [annulment](#). Henry married [Anne Boleyn](#). [Pope Clement VII](#) [excommunicated](#) Henry VIII in 1533.



1534: Henry VIII broke with the Church in Rome with the [Act of Supremacy](#), which made the king the head of the Church of England. In January **1536** [Anne Boleyn](#) had a son. Unfortunately the child was born dead. Later that year Henry accused Anne of committing adultery with five different men. Anne and the men were all executed.



1536: On the **30th of May** King Henry and Jane Seymour were married. The following year, Jane gave birth to [Edward](#). Henry had a male heir.

1537: In January Jane Seymour died after the premature birth of a son, the future King Edward VI.

1540: Henry married Anne of Cleves but the marriage was annulled.



1540: On **July 28th** 49 year old Henry married 19 year old Catherine Howard. **1542:** On **13th February** Catherine Howard was executed.



1543: Henry married Catherine Parr. She outlived him.



1547: Henry VIII died on 28 January and was succeeded by his son Edward VI



Henry VIII was a significant figure in the history of the English monarchy. Although in the early part of his reign he suppressed the influence of the [Protestant Reformation](#) in England, he is more popularly known for his role in the separation of the [Church of England](#) from the [Roman Catholic Church](#). Henry's struggles with [Rome](#) ultimately led to the separation of the Church of England from papal authority, the [Dissolution of the Monasteries](#), and establishing himself as the [Supreme Head of the Church of England](#). He remained a supporter of traditional Catholic ceremony and doctrine throughout his life.