The Four Countries of the UK and Their Capitals

KS2 GEOGRAPHY Ages 9-12 ⏰ 3 min read

What is the United Kingdom?

The **United Kingdom** is made up of four separate countries that are joined together. You might think of it as one country, but it's actually more like a team of four teammates working together. Each country has its own government, traditions, and capital city.

Think of it like a school: the whole school is one place, but it has different year groups (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5) that are all part of the same school.

The Four Countries

The four countries are **England**, **Scotland**, **Wales**, and **Northern Ireland**. They share the same island (or islands, to be more precise) in the north-west of Europe.

England and London

England is the largest country by population. Its capital city is **London**, which is also the capital of the whole United Kingdom. London is famous for Big Ben, the Tower of London, and the River Thames. Around **9 million people** live in London.

Scotland and Edinburgh

Scotland sits to the north of England and is known for its mountains, lochs (that means lakes), and beautiful landscapes. The capital of Scotland is **Edinburgh**, a historic city famous for Edinburgh Castle and the annual Festival. About **530,000 people** live in Edinburgh.

Wales and Cardiff

Wales is to the west of England and is known for its own language, which many Welsh people still speak today alongside English. The capital is **Cardiff**, located in the south of Wales. Cardiff has a beautiful castle and is home to about **360,000 people**.

Northern Ireland and Belfast

Northern Ireland is situated on the island of Ireland, sharing the island with the country of Ireland (which is separate from the UK). The capital is **Belfast**, famous for its shipyards and as the birthplace of the Titanic. Around **280,000 people** live in Belfast.

Think of it like siblings in a family: they have different personalities and interests, but they're all part of the same family.

Why Do They Stay Together?

These four countries have been united for hundreds of years through historical agreements and laws. They share the same government in some areas but also have their own governments that look after their own issues.

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