

# Henry VIII

Henry VIII was born in 1491 and was the second son of King Henry VII (the first Tudor king) and Elizabeth of York. As Henry VIII had an older brother, Arthur, he wasn't expected to be king, but Arthur died and Henry became king in his place. Henry VIII was king from 1509 to 1547. Henry VIII married Arthur's widow, Catherine of Aragon.

Henry VIII had six wives as he tried to have a healthy son to succeed him as king.

These are Henry VIII's wives:

- 1) Catherine of Aragon (divorced) mother of Mary I (Mary Tudor or Bloody Mary)
- 2) Anne Boleyn (beheaded) mother of Elizabeth I
- 3) Jane Seymour (died) mother of Edward VI
- 4) Anne of Cleves (divorced)
- 5) Catherine Howard (beheaded)
- 6) Catherine Parr (survived)

When Henry was young he was quite athletic and enjoyed music, dancing, hunting and knew several languages.

Henry VIII improved the Royal Navy to defend England against any attacks from France and Spain. His flagship was the famous Mary Rose.

When Henry was married to Catherine of Aragon most of the people belonged to the Catholic Church. To be able to divorce Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII replaced the Pope as the head of the Church in England, beginning The Church of England.

Later, Henry VIII, helped by Thomas Cromwell, ordered the monasteries to be destroyed and took their wealth and lands - which was about a quarter of the land in England.

As Henry got older, he put on a lot of weight. He liked living at Hampton Court in London.

When Henry VIII died in 1547 he was fifty - five years old. He is buried with his third wife, Jane Seymour, at Windsor Castle.

