

# What is Britain?

.....hopefully we can deal with the confusion here by addressing a few questions !

## Is Britain the same as Great Britain?

Sometimes people use the shortened name **Britain** instead of **Great Britain**, to mean the same thing, but really *Britain* only refers to England and Wales.

The name Britain goes back to Roman times when they called England and Wales "Britannia" (or "Britannia Major", to distinguish it from "Britannia Minor", ie Brittany in France). The Roman province of Britannia only covered the areas of modern England and Wales. The Romans never conquered the area of modern Scotland.



## Is Great Britain the same as the UK?

No, Great Britain and the United Kingdom refer to different areas.

Great Britain is very often, but *incorrectly*, used as a synonym for the sovereign state properly known as the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** or the **UK** for short. The correct interpretation for "Great Britain" is the official name given to the *two* kingdoms of **England** and **Scotland** and the principality of **Wales**



If you look at the full name of the **UK**, you will see that the UK includes Great Britain **AND** Northern Ireland



**The UK is made up of:**

- ✓ **England** - The capital is London.
- ✓ **Scotland** - The capital is Edinburgh
- ✓ **Wales** - The capital is Cardiff.
- ✓ **Northern Ireland** – The capital is Belfast

## What is the British Isles?

The **British Isles** is a geographical term which includes two large islands, **Great Britain** and **Ireland**, and **5,000 small islands**, most notably the Isle of Man which has its own parliament and laws.

The British Isles are occupied by two nations:

### 1. **United Kingdom** - a union of:

- ✓ England
- ✓ Scotland
- ✓ Wales
- ✓ Northern Ireland

### 2. **Republic of Ireland**

### The islands in the British Isles

The British Isles consists of the following islands:

- ✓ **Great Britain** (England, Scotland and Wales)
- ✓ **Ireland** (Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland)
- ✓ **The Orkney and Shetland Islands** - Islands off the northeast coast of Scotland
- ✓ **The Isle of Man** - An island in the Irish Sea
- ✓ **Hebrides** - Islands off the northwest coast of Scotland
- ✓ **The Isle of Wight** - An island off the southern coast of England
- ✓ **Isles of Scilly** - Islands off the southwest coast of England
- ✓ **Lundy Island** - An island off the southwest coast of England
- ✓ **The Channel Islands** - A group of small islands in the English Channel, off the coast of Normandy, France. The principal islands of the group include **Jersey**, **Guernsey**, **Alderney** and **Sark**.
- ✓ Plus many other offshore islands

.....still confused ? Well I did my best !!

