

<p>1. The nation that many people call “England” or “Britain” is properly known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or UK.</p>	<p>2. England, Scotland and Wales are all on the island known as “Great Britain.” The word “British” is used to describe all people from the UK, including Northern Ireland.</p>
<p>3. People of the UK often call their homeland “the British Isles” because there are some 2,000 islands in the UK.</p>	<p>4. The UK has one of the highest number of people per square mile in the world. 90% of the population lives in urban areas.</p>
<p>5. Most British people live in a house of five or six small rooms: two or three bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom.</p>	<p>6. Greater London, the capital of the UK, is Europe’s largest city.</p>

<p>7. Each country of the UK has its own symbol: England is the rose, Scotland the thistle, Wales the leek and Northern Ireland a red hand.</p>	<p>8. Because of its history the UK has a variety of languages: English is the official language but Welsh is taught in schools in Wales and special dictionaries are printed in Scotland to include the different “Scots” words they use. Gaelic (a language related to Irish) is also used in the Scottish Highlands.</p>
<p>9. The two official religions of the UK are Anglican (Church of England) and the Church of Scotland. However, the British people are free to choose whatever religion they want.</p>	<p>10. With a large immigrant population from India, Africa and Asia, there are large Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim communities in England</p>
<p>11. Education is free and required from age 5 to 16. Publicly funded schools are called “state” schools. “Public” schools in the UK are what people in the United States and Canada would call “private” schools.</p>	<p>12. Before leaving school at age 16, students take exams in various subjects. Those who want to go to a university must study for another two years for advanced level exams. About half the students choose to go on to higher education.</p>

<p>13. Everyone in the UK is entitled to free health care, regardless of how much money they make.</p>	<p>14. The Edinburgh Festival (Scotland) is held in August and is one of the greatest arts festivals in the world. Over 1,000 dance, theater, music and film acts perform at the festival, using over 200 locations.</p>
<p>15. Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, was the chief shipbuilding center in the late 1800s: the famous ship “Titanic” was built there.</p>	<p>16. Sports are very popular in the UK. Tennis, soccer and rugby were all introduced by the English. The game of golf developed in Scotland</p>
<p>17. The UK has the third-largest internet industry in the world.</p>	<p>18. May Day (May 1) is an ancient celebration of spring that goes back thousands of years in England. Common features still include dancing around a maypole, parades, and stories told in dance by Morris Dancers. Some towns have their own special customs.</p>

<p>19. Wales is famous for its music, especially choirs. On St. David's Day (March 1) a male voice choir with 1,000 singers performs in the Welsh capital Cardiff.</p>		<p>20. Saint David is connected with the Welsh symbol, the leek. One story says that David told Welshmen to wear a leek in their hats during an important battle, which they then won. In the Welsh regiment of the British army, soldiers eat a raw leek on Saint David's Day.</p>