

Iron Age

Fact Cards

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Boudicca

Iron Age Celts belonged to different tribes, with each tribe having their own king or queen. Boudicca became queen of the Iceni tribe after her husband, Prasutagus, had died.

The Romans invaded Britain in search of land and wealth. After Prasutagus' death, they turned on Boudicca and her people. Boudicca and her army attacked the Roman capital of Colchester, and won. They also defeated the Romans in London and St Albans. The Romans fought back, defeating Boudicca and her army at the battle of Watling Street. Nobody knows what happened to Boudicca.



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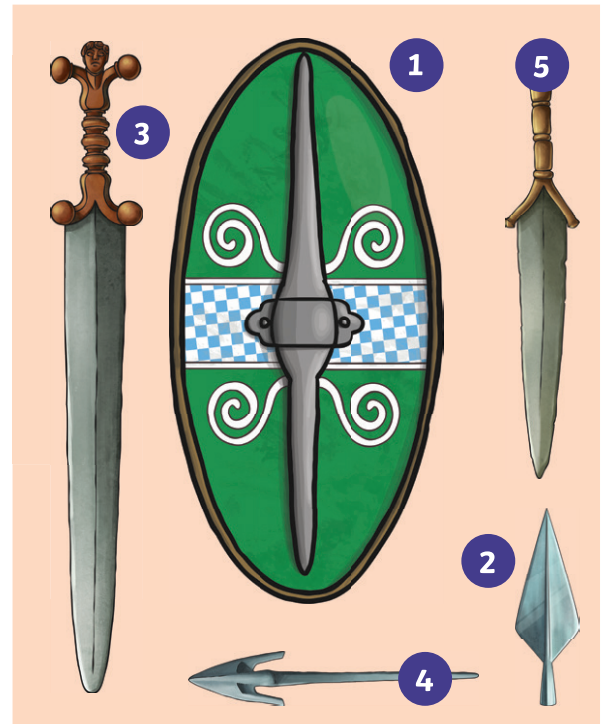
Weapons

The Iron Age Celts are called this because they introduced iron working technology. They became great craftsmen, creating weapons and household objects from this metal. Before this, bronze was the main metal used.

It is reported that many Celtic warriors charged into battle without any weapons or armour, and sometimes without any clothes at all! The warriors who did carry weapons would have used iron swords and oval-shaped wooden shields. They also fought with iron tipped spears. Warriors would also wear blue warpaint.



1. Oval shield
2. Iron spearhead
3. Iron shortsword
4. Iron arrowhead
5. Iron dagger



Farming, Food and Cooking

The Iron Age Celts were mainly farmers. They grew crops such as spelt wheat, barley and oats. Farmers also gathered berries, nuts, plants and hunted animals.

Animals were farmed for their meat and milk. Cows, pigs, goat and sheep were the most commonly kept animals. Celts also ate deer, bear, wild boar and fish and collected honey and eggs.

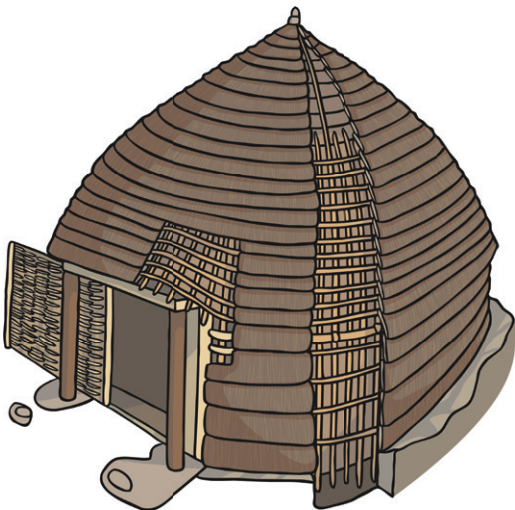
Inside a Celtic home, or roundhouse, there would be a fire with the smoke escaping from a small hole in the roof. The warmth from the fire meant that meat and fish could be hung and smoked and herbs could be dried out. Cooking could be done over the fire in metal cauldrons, and basic clay cooking pots were also used. The roundhouse may have had an oven for baking bread and meat was roasted over an open fire, either outside or inside the home.



Hillforts and Roundhouses

Hillforts were defended settlements which made use of the natural rises in the landscape for defensive advantage. During the Iron Age, each hillfort was home to hundreds of people.

A roundhouse was a typical Iron Age home built within a hillfort. Some of these were very large and housed many people. The walls of the house were made out of wattle and daub. Wattle was interwoven sticks of wood and daub was a mixture of animal dung, clay and straw. A thatched roof covered the structure.



Clothing and Jewellery

The Celts wore woollen clothes which were dyed with natural colours from berries and plants. They wove the wool using a loom and sewed pieces together using metal or bone needles.

Just like we do today, Celts wore jewellery. Pieces were made from bronze, silver, gold and tin. Important people such as chieftains, wore a gold torc, which was a twisted neckband.

Women wore floor length skirts or dresses, with a cloak pinned with a brooch and men wore T-shaped tunics with a belt and trousers.



Religion

Druids were Celtic priests who claimed they could tell the future by studying nature. They were religious leaders who acted as advisers to the people and would punish those who did not follow the rules.

The Celts believed in hundreds of gods and goddesses. They killed animals as a gift to the gods and threw weapons into rivers and lakes to please the gods and bring them luck.

Celts also believed that there was life after death so they were buried with their possessions. They thought they would take these items with them into the next life.

