

The original name of Great Britain is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Britain lies off the north-west coast of Europe. It consists of two large islands - Great Britain and Ireland - and about 5,000 smaller ones. Its neighbors are Ireland to west and France to south-east.

England is mostly rolling land. The Highlands of Scotland are the highest mountains in Britain. The longest rivers are the Severn and the Thames. The UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has been the official title of the British state ever since 1922. The UK is constitutional monarchy. This means that the official head of state is the monarch, but his or her powers are limited by the constitution. Great Britain is divided into four parts: England and its capital is London, Scotland and its capital is Edinburgh, Wales and its capital is Cardiff, Northern Ireland and its capital is Belfast. Population is about 60,000,000 people. The main industries are steel, metals, vehicles, shipbuilding, shipping, banking, insurance, textiles, chemicals, electronics, aircraft, machinery, and distilling. The main agricultural products are corn, sugar beet, fruit, and vegetables. Britain is rich in coal, tin, oil, gas, chalk and lead. The lowest point is the Fens and the highest point is Ben Nevis. Between France and England is linked tunnel under the English Channel. Commonwealth of UK is Australia, Canada, Bermuda, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar. The chief of state is Queen ELIZABETH II, Heir Apparent is Prince CHARLES. The head of government is Prime Minister Anthony BLAIR. Britain is the member of nearly all important international organizations - UN, NATO and OECD. Besides London, which is in the centre of each tourist's attention, there are many other fascinating places: Oxford and Cambridge are the old university towns. Stratford-upon-Avon is the birthplace of William Shakespeare. Canterbury is an ancient city with a majestic cathedral. Birmingham is the second largest city in Britain. Scotland is a historically and culturally separate country from England. It has its own legal and educational system and currency. The biggest city is Glasgow and the capital is Edinburgh.