



As we celebrate our Monarch's Platinum Jubilee; what else was happening throughout the decades?

1950s-2020s





# 1950s

In the UK, the 1950s was a time of great social change. Free from the threat of World War II (apart from rationing), Britons could look forward with a new hope and optimism. The fifties saw the beginnings of the introduction of several 'mod cons' into the home, which began to make family life both easier and more fun. New gadgets meant that women benefited the most (as they mostly took care of the home). In time, as more and more inventions became affordable for the average family, women would be given more freedom to focus on other things. Fridges were only owned by a few at the start of the decade but this changed as time went on.







By the end of the 1950s most homes had a Hoover. At this time around two thirds of the population had a television. For the Queen's Coronation multiple families crowded around one television set. The 1950s was a decade that saw the gradual improvement of living standards and home comforts as we know it today. It was an exciting decade, paving the way for modern Britain.

Even the humble teabag

originates from the 1950s, although at the time most people opted for the familiarity of tea-leaves.



## The Birth of the Teenager

Perhaps the most striking difference within the family itself was the 'birth of the teenager'. A phase of life that is taken for granted today. Before the 1950s, young people did not have their own music or fashions they simply conformed to the guidance of their elders. Neither did they have their own places to go, away from their parents. It was very exciting being a young person during the fifties because they were



the first of their kind. The term 'teenager' was literally invented. There was almost zero unemployment, it was so easy to get a job, you could walk out of a job one day and start another the next day. The new teenagers of the 1950s were empowered like never before and they formed their own subculture.



## 1950s Fashion

It was an exciting time for the clothing industry with the invention of several new fabrics like nylon which allowed clothes to keep their shape and feel comfortable at the same time. This also made way for the possibility of colour and patterns. Polyester soon became the perfect material to explore a new fashion. The new teenagers dressed differently to their parents for the first time and they suddenly had opinions about what they wanted to wear.

The existence of aerosol hairspray in the 1950s also gave young people the opportunity to create different hairstyles that could be held in place more easily. Backcombing became popular but back then people didn't realise that was bad for your hair and the aerosols were bad for the environment.





## Music



As the forties made way for the fifties, most young people were not exactly inspired by the musical entertainment available within the home. Old gramophone record players - huge, heavy and very expensive - were listened to in the living room only. Because they were so expensive, and because the records themselves were expensive, fragile and wore out after a certain number of plays, music in the home was mainly controlled by parents. What's more, the music at the beginning of the decade was deemed dull and dreary by many young people. Change, however, was right around the corner.



The development of the transistor in the 50s allowed record players to shrink somewhat in size. Prior to this, large glass valves were relied upon - these were costly. Suddenly, record players became small enough to move into other areas of the house - and the price came down as well. Working teenagers could, for the first time, save up for their very own music player - the Dansette was a memorable example. This allowed young people to listen to music in their own rooms, thus transforming the bedroom from a practical sleeping area to a private retreat. This further highlighted the individuality that the young subculture was carving out for themselves.



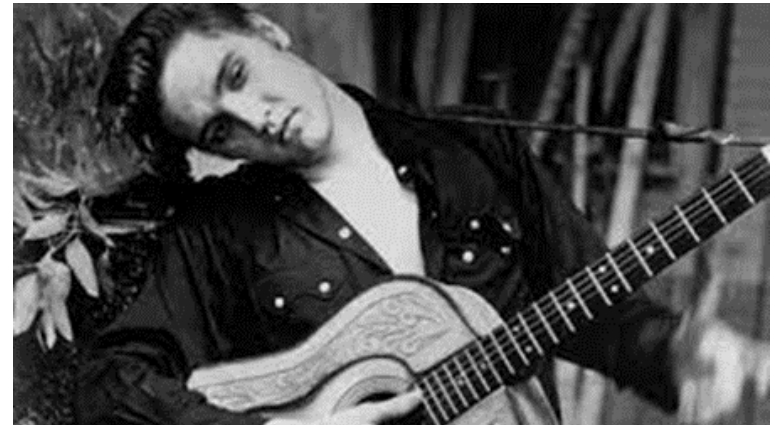
Record players became smaller and more affordable and the records themselves followed suit. Previously expensive, fragile and belonging to parents, the invention of the vinyl disc cured all the problems. Prior to vinyl, shellac had been used - but it wasn't made to last and shattered very easily. Progression meant that records became cheaper and more durable and sales by young people soared - in fact, as the fifties reached a close, half of all music was purchased by teenagers.



That might not have been the case, however, if it was not for the change in the music itself. The music of the forties and very early fifties did not exactly set alight the minds of young people. But change was right around the corner, because Rock 'n' Roll was born along with the introduction of the first mass-produced solid-body electric guitar, by Fender. 1954 onwards saw the biggest revolution in the music world - and it very much belonged to the youth of the day. Bill Haley and Elvis Presley are widely considered to be at the forefront of this revolution - although the roots of rock and roll can be traced back to earlier American rhythm and blues music. Rock and roll had its own sound, however, and it took the world - and the younger



generation  
in particular  
- by storm.  
Record sales



went up and dancing was revolutionised. Elvis was seen as daring and raunchy, but girls went mad for him. Life for the young adult was fun.



# 1960s

The 1960s was a decade of change in Britain. Shifts in law, politics and media reflected a new individualism and growing appetite to live in a more liberal 'permissive society'. People began to stand up for their rights, both civil and at work, and express themselves in new ways.

The 1960s was an important decade in liberalisation of the law, particularly in relation to sexual behaviour.

In 1960, Penguin won a 'not guilty' verdict against the Crown, which had brought an obscenity prosecution against D. H. Lawrence's novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

It was seen as a watershed moment in the liberalisation of publishing, with the book going on to sell 3 million copies.



The decade saw two major milestones for women's sexual liberation. In 1961, the contraceptive pill was made available on the NHS, and the *Abortion Act* of 1967 legalised termination for pregnancies under 28 weeks.

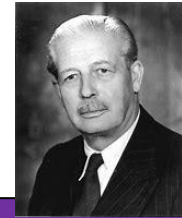
Another significant change was the *Sexual Offences Act* (1967), which decriminalised homosexual activity between two men over 21 years old.



There was also liberalisation of laws affecting prostitution (*Sexual Offences Act*, 1956) and divorce (*Divorce Reform Act*, 1956). In 1969, The Human Rights Act formally abolished the death penalty in the UK, meaning that a public official, including the police or courts, cannot execute someone or sentence them to death as punishment for something they have done.



## Affluence



In 1957 British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan remarked in a speech:

“Indeed, let us be frank about it – most of our people have never had it so good. Go around the country, go to the industrial towns, go to the farms and you will see a state of prosperity such as we have never had in my lifetime – nor indeed in the history of this country.”

This idea of having ‘never had it so good’ earmarked an age of affluence that many historians feel drove social change in the next decade. After the economic hardship of the 1930s and the massive strain caused by World War II, Britain and many other large industrial economies were having a resurgence.

In terms of income and expenditure, in general, British people earned and spent more. Between 1959 and 1967 the number of incomes below £600 (around £13,500 today) per year dropped 40%. On average people were spending more on cars, entertainment, and holidays.

## Increasing Secularisation

With a rise affluence, leisure time and media viewing habits, populations in Western society began to lose their religion. This could be felt in the drop in the number of people engaging in religious customs and practices. For example, between 1963-69, Anglican confirmations per head dropped by 32%, while ordinations fell by 25%. Methodist membership also dropped by 24%.



1963 was seen as a cultural turning point, pointing towards a 'sexual revolution' encouraged by the introduction of the pill and the Profumo scandal. The latter was a major scandal in 20<sup>th</sup> century British politics. John Profumo, the Secretary of State for War, had an extramarital affair with 19-year-old model Christine Keeler beginning in 1961. Profumo denied the affair in a statement to the House of Commons, but weeks later a police investigation exposed the truth, proving that Profumo had lied to the House of Commons. The scandal severely damaged the credibility of Macmillan's government, and Macmillan resigned as Prime Minister in October 1963, citing ill health. Ultimately, the fallout contributed to the Conservative government's defeat by the Labour Party in the 1964 general election.

## The Growth of Mass Media

Immediate post-war Britain saw only 25,000 houses with television. By 1961 this number had risen to 75% of all homes and by 1971 it was 91%.



In 1964 the BBC launched its second channel; the same year Top of the Pops began broadcasting and in 1966 over 32 million people watched England win the football World Cup. In 1967 BBC2 broadcast the first colour broadcast – the Wimbledon tennis tournament.

During the decade the number of colour television licences grew from 275,000 to 12 million.

In addition to mass television viewing, the 1960s saw big changes in radio. In 1964 an unlicensed radio station called Radio Caroline began broadcasting in Britain.





By the end of the year the airwaves were filled with other unlicensed stations – mainly broadcasting from offshore. The public were drawn to the young and free-spirited disc jockeys who played ‘Top 40’ hits. Unfortunately for listeners, these stations were outlawed in 1967.

However, on 30 September of the same year, BBC Radio made some major changes. BBC Radio 1 was launched as a ‘pop’ music station with DJ Tony Blackburn. BBC Radio 2 (renamed from BBC Light Programme) began broadcasting easy listening entertainment. BBC Third Programme and BBC Music Programme merged to create BBC Radio 3 and the BBC Home Service became BBC Radio 4.



Almost every household in Britain owned a radio during the 1960s and with that came the spread of both news and music.

## Music

British music changed significantly, with widespread introduction of rock and roll music and creation of the pop market.

The Beatles defined British music in the 1960s. Both Britain and the United States were swept up in 'Beatlemania'. With their formation in 1960 and break up in 1970 the Beatles bookend the 1960s musical revolution.



By August 1964, the Beatles had sold around 80 million records globally.

The Beatles were just one part of the 'British Invasion' – bands such as the Rolling Stones, The Kinks, The Who and The Animals were becoming popular in the United States.

These bands topped the charts on both sides of the Atlantic and appeared on popular talk shows such as the Ed Sullivan Show. It was one of the first times British music had made its mark on America.

## Labour's general election win

In 1964, Harold Wilson became the youngest Prime Minister in 150 years – winning a narrow victory over the Conservatives. This was the first Labour government in 13 years, and with it came a wave of social change.

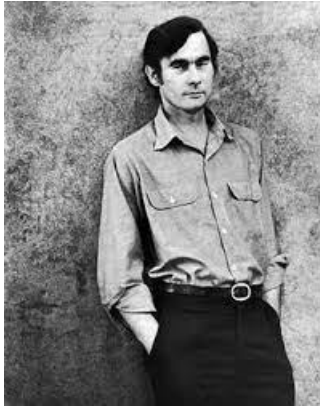


Home Secretary Roy Jenkins introduced a number of liberalising legal changes that decreased the state's role in people's lives. Extra university places were created along with polytechnics and technical colleges. More people had access to further education than ever before.

Wilson's government also built over a million new houses and introduced subsidies for people on low-income, helping them to buy houses. However, the economy suffered under Wilson's spending and Labour were voted out in 1970.



## Counterculture and protest



With a growing distrust of the establishment came a new movement. The term counterculture – coined by Theodore Roszak in 1969 – refers to the world-wide movement which gained momentum as issues of civil and women's rights took centre stage.

Protests swept the globe during the 1960s and counterculture was a driving force behind these. Student protests against the Vietnam War and nuclear weapons were especially popular.





In London, the UK underground originated in Ladbroke Grove and Notting Hill.

Often connected with the 'hippie' and 'bohemian' lifestyles, the underground was influenced by

beatnik writers such as William Burroughs and

held benefit gigs where bands like Pink Floyd performed.

The underground also produced its own newspapers – notably *International Times*. The counterculture movement is often connected with more open drug use – particularly cannabis and LSD. This in turn lead to a rise of psychedelic music and fashion.



## Fashion

Throughout the decade people were finding new ways to express themselves.



Designers such as Mary Quant popularised new styles. Quant is famous for “inventing” the mini-skirt and bringing mass production of affordable fashion to the public.

Quant’s simpler designs from the ‘Ginger Group’ were available in 75 outlets in the UK to those on a more modest wage. On 4 February 1962, her designs graced the cover of the first ever colour *Sunday Times*

*Magazine* cover.

As well as the rise of the mini-skirt, the 1960s saw women wearing trousers for the first time.

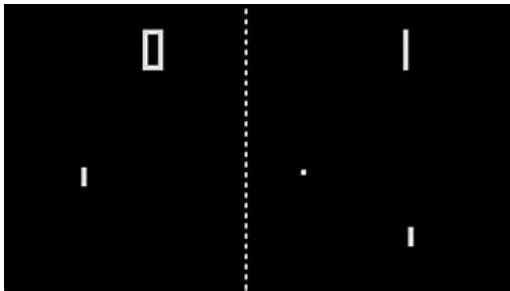
Styles such as drainpipe jeans and capri pants were popularised by influential figures like Audrey Hepburn and Twiggy. Women became increasingly comfortable asserting their equality with men.





# 1970s

Looking back on the 1970s, a number of new things sprung into life – ‘Pong’, one of the first computer games, space-hoppers, space voyages, mini-skirts, Concorde and ridiculously high falsetto voices singing *Stayin’ Alive*...



The 1970s is often seen as the decade that taste forgot. However, it was also a decade which saw people choosing to rebel and break away from the gentle, domestic and materialistic way of life promoted by most of the country until that point.



## Households

The previous decade had been prosperous and commercial so by the time the 1970s rolled around, most households were full of labour-saving devices (such as microwaves) and new entertainment systems (goodbye 12" records, hello groovy tape decks). With new advances in household goods, people



found that they didn't need to commit much of their day to housework and cooking, which meant that many women could take up jobs of their own.

## Decade of Change

The 1970s was a decade of change: contraception became free of charge for women in 1974 and the Sex Discrimination Act in 1975 made it illegal for employers to discriminate based on gender in a number of industries.

For women's health, the introduction of the free contraceptive pill was the most important change of the latter half of the century. Although, not everyone supported the pill. Some faith groups were opposed to artificial birth control, saying it is a form of abortion.



When introduced on the NHS, the pill was prescribed mainly to older women who already had children and did not want any more. The government at the time did not want to be seen to be encouraging promiscuity or 'free love'. Although there were not any restrictions on its use, the take-up of GPs prescribing it was slow.

That all changed in 1974 when family planning clinics were allowed to prescribe single women with the pill - a controversial decision at the time.

## Effects on marriage

The pill was liberating for both sexes as previously women had had to rely heavily on men for contraception, whereas, with its introduction, they had control.

It has enabled individuals - women and men - to control their reproductive health and to choose when they want to have a child, from a social point of view, it was bound to have had an impact in families and relationships.

The pill encouraged the delay of marriage through routes such as reducing the necessity of marrying to have sex and lowering the incidence of 'shotgun marriages.' Without the pressure to get married, many couples turned to co-habiting.

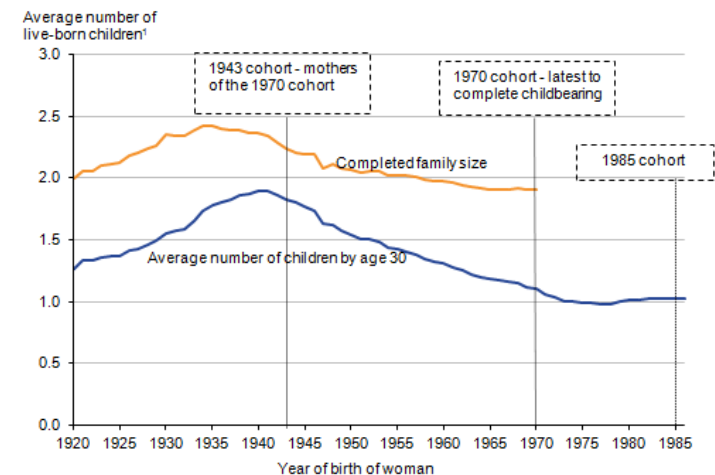
Christine Northam, a counsellor working for Relate, says the pill gave women the opportunity to be "freer in their own sexual habits, to have freedom to have sex as and when they wanted to". She says the pill changed the dynamics in relationships.

"It instigated a change in the role of men and women. Men have had to make changes themselves because their roles have changed and some have found it easier than others to cope with this," she says.

Ms Northam adds that one impact of the pill was that there were not as many children available for adoption as there had been in the past, as there were not as many unwanted children anymore. "It's made us value children perhaps more than in the past," she says.



In terms of controlling the UK's population size, it did not have a significant impact as reproduction is controlled in other ways. For example, the 1920s and 1970s had a similar number of childless women. In the 1970s it was more through choice, whereas in the 1920s it was because women had not found a partner, partly because many were working as servants and were not able to set up home until later in life.





## Fashion



Fashion in the 1970s was about individuality. In the early 1970s, *Vogue* proclaimed 'There are no rules in the fashion game now' due to overproduction flooding the market with cheap synthetic clothing. Common items included miniskirts, bell-bottoms popularized by hippies, vintage clothing from the 1950s and earlier, and the androgynous glam rock and disco styles that introduced platform shoes, bright colours, glitter, and satin.

New technologies brought advances in production through mass production, higher efficiency, generating higher standards and uniformity. Generally, the most famous silhouette of the mid and late 1970s for both genders was that of tight on top and loose on bottom. The 1970s also saw the birth of the indifferent, anti-conformist casual chic approach to fashion, which consisted of sweaters, T-shirts, jeans, and sneakers.



The French designer Yves Saint Laurent and the American designer Halston both observed and embraced the changes that were happening in the society, especially the huge growth of women's rights and the youth counterculture. They successfully adapted their design aesthetics to accommodate the changes that the market was aiming for.



Top fashion models in the 1970s were Lauren Hutton, Margaux Hemingway, Beverly Johnson, Gia Carangi, Janice Dickinson, Cheryl Tiegs, Jerry Hall, and Iman.





# 1980s

During the summer of 1981, the nation's spirits were raised by the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer. The ceremony reached a global TV audience of 750 million people. It restored the royal family to the headlines



where they would become a permanent fixture in tabloids and celebrity gossip publications, as well as a major tourist attraction. Princess Diana was one of the most popular members of the Royal Family from her engagement until the present day. She later became known as the People's Princess.

## Thatcher's Britain



Politics in the 1980s was dominated by Margaret Thatcher, leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister from 1979-1990. She was often compared to Churchill and David Lloyd George for her transformative agenda commonly referred to as 'Thatcherism'. She was often referred to as the 'Iron Lady' for her uncompromising politics and leadership style.

As PM, she implemented policies focused on economic liberalism, using populism, and pragmatism, known as Thatcherism. She introduced a series of political and economic initiatives intended to reverse high unemployment and Britain's struggles in the wake of the Winter of Discontent and recession. Her political philosophy and economic policies emphasised deregulation (particularly of the financial sector), flexible labour markets, the privatisation of state-owned companies and reducing the power and influence of trade unions. Due to recession and high unemployment, Thatcher's popularity during her first years in office waned until the beginning of 1982, a few months before the Falklands War. The afterglow of her victory at that war produced a resounding victory at the polls. She was re-elected in 1983 with an increased majority.



Privatisation was an enduring legacy of Thatcherism; it was accepted by the future Labour ministry of Tony Blair. Her policy was to privatise nationalised corporations (such as telephone/aerospace). She sold public housing to tenants, all on favourable terms. The policy developed an important electoral dimension during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thatcher government (1983–87). It involved more than denationalisation: wider share ownership was the second part of the policy. Thatcher advocated an 'enterprise society' in Britain, especially in widespread share-ownership, personal ownership of council houses, the marginalisation of trade unions and the expansion of private healthcare. These policies transformed many aspects of British society.[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_history\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_Kingdom\\_\(1979%E2%80%93present\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_history_of_the_United_Kingdom_(1979%E2%80%93present)) - cite note-7

Thatcher was re-elected for a 3<sup>rd</sup> term in 1987. During this period, her support for a Community Charge (popularly referred to as the 'poll tax') was widely unpopular (especially in Scotland where the tax was enforced one year earlier than the rest of the country) and her negative views on the European Community were not shared by others in her Cabinet. She lost support from Conservative MPs and resigned as Prime

Minister of the United Kingdom and Leader of the Conservative Party in November 1990.

## Cultural movements

Environmentalism as a major public issue was brought to the forefront by Thatcher in 1988, when she included a manifesto warning about climate change. The environmentalism movements of the 1980s reduced the emphasis on intensive farming, and promoted organic farming and conservation of the countryside.

Protestant religious observance declined notably in Britain during the second half of the twentieth century. Catholicism (based on the Irish elements) held its own, while Islam grew rapidly due to immigration from Asia and the Middle East as well as higher birth rates from that sector of the general population. Church of England attendance particularly dropped,

**"We must  
remember  
our duty  
to Nature  
before it is  
too late."**

*Margaret Thatcher*

although charismatic churches like Elim and AOG grew. The movement to Keep Sunday Special seemed to have lost at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

## LGBT rights

Although 'homosexual acts' had been partially decriminalised for consenting men over the age of 21 in England and Wales in 1967 (Sexual Offences Act 1967), it was not until the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 1980 that the same happened in Scotland.[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_history\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_Kingdom\\_\(1979%E2%80%93present\)-](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_history_of_the_United_Kingdom_(1979%E2%80%93present)-cite_note-Let's_talk_about_sex-12)



[cite note-Let's talk about sex-12](#) That year, the documentary *A Change of Sex* aired on BBC2, which enabled viewers to follow the social and medical transition of Julia Grant. The Self-Help Association for Transsexuals (SHAFT) and the first Black Gay and Lesbian Group was formed in the UK and Lionel Blue became the first British rabbi to come out as gay. The UK's first television series aimed at a gay audience was broadcast on London Weekend Television, called *Gay Life*. In 1981, the European Court of Human Rights struck down Northern Ireland's criminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting adults the Homosexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 1982 later partially

decriminalised 'homosexual acts' in Northern Ireland. The next year, Chris Smith, says: "My name is Chris Smith. I'm the Labour MP for Islington South and Finsbury, and I'm gay", making him the first openly out gay politician in the UK parliament.

## AIDS

The first UK case of AIDS was recorded when a 49-year-old man was admitted to a London Hospital suffering from PCP (Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia). He died ten days later. Terry Higgins died of AIDS in St Thomas' Hospital London, and his friends and partner Martyn Butler set up the Terry Higgins Trust - the first UK AIDS charity. In 1983, Britain reported 17 cases of AIDS; gay men are asked not to donate blood. The next year, Britain reported 108 cases of AIDS with 46 deaths from the disease. In 1985, AIDS hysteria grew in the UK when passengers on the *Queen Elizabeth II* curtailed their holiday as a person with AIDS was discovered on board. Cunard were criticised for trying to cover this up. A London support group Body Positive was set up that year for people affected by HTLV-3 and AIDS. Health Minister, Kenneth Clarke, enacted powers to detain people with AIDS in hospital against their will. In 1987, the first UK





specialist HIV ward was opened by Princess Diana - she did not wear gloves or a mask when she shook hands with the patients. AZT, the first HIV drug to show promise of suppressing the disease was made available in the UK for the first time.



# 1990s

The decade, known as the Golden Age of Multiculturalism, saw a rise in the awareness of multiculturalism compared to the 1980s, as well as the advance of alternative media. Music movements like grunge, the rave scene, and hip hop became popular with young people worldwide, aided by cable television and the Internet. The 1990s saw advances in technology, with the World Wide Web, the first gene therapy trial, and cloning all emerging and being improved upon throughout the decade.





## Politics

Margaret Thatcher, who had been the UK's Prime Minister since 1979, resigned on 22 November 1990 after being challenged for the leadership of the Conservative Party by Michael Heseltine. This was because of widespread opposition to the introduction of the controversial Community Charge, and the fact that her key allies resigned over the deeply sensitive issues of the Maastricht Treaty and Margaret Thatcher's resistance to Britain joining the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. Less than two years later on the infamous Black Wednesday of September 1992, the pound sterling crashed out of the system after the



pound fell below the agreed exchange rate with the Deutsche Mark. John Major replaced Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister in 1990.

The IRA agreed to a truce in 1994. This marked the beginning of the end of 25 years of violence between the IRA and the United Kingdom, and the start of political negotiations.

Tony Blair became Prime Minister in 1997 following the 1997 United Kingdom general election.

## **Wars**

During the 1990s the UK was involved in several wars starting with The Gulf War from Aug 1990-Feb 1991. Iraq was left in severe debt after the 1980s Iran–Iraq War. President Saddam Hussein accused Kuwait of flooding the market with oil and driving down prices. As a result, Iraqi forces invaded and conquered Kuwait. The UN (United Nations) immediately condemned the action, and a coalition force led by the United States was



sent to the Persian Gulf. Aerial bombing of Iraq began in January 1991, and a month later, the UN forces drove the Iraqi army from Kuwait in four days.

The Bosnian War (1992–1995) involved several ethnically defined factions within Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats as well as a smaller Bosniak faction led by Fikret Abdić. The Siege of Sarajevo (1992–1995) marked the most violent urban warfare in Europe since World War II at that time as Serb forces bombard and attack Bosniak-controlled and -populated areas of the city. War crimes occur including ethnic cleansing and destruction of civilian property.

The final fighting in the Croatian and Bosnian wars ended in 1995 with the success of Croatian military offensives against Serb forces and the mass exodus of Serbs from Croatia in 1995; Serb losses to Croat and Bosniak forces; and finally, the signing of the Dayton Agreement, which internally partitioned Bosnia and Herzegovina into a Republika Srpska and a Bosniak-Croat federation.





The Kosovo War (1998–1999) between Albanian separatists and Yugoslav military and Serb paramilitary forces in Kosovo began in 1996 and escalated in 1998 with increasing reports of atrocities taking place. In 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) led by the United States launched air attacks against Yugoslavia (then composed of only Serbia and Montenegro) to pressure the Yugoslav government to end its military operations against Albanian separatists in Kosovo. The intervention lacked UN approval, yet was justified by NATO based on accusations of war crimes being committed by Yugoslav military forces working alongside nationalist Serb paramilitary groups. After months of bombing, Yugoslavia accepted NATO's demands and NATO forces (later UN peacekeeping forces) occupied Kosovo.

### **German Reunification**

Germany reunified on 3 October 1990 as a result of the fall of the Berlin Wall and after integrating the economic structure and provincial governments, focused on modernization of the former communist East. People who were brought up in a socialist culture became integrated with those living in capitalist western Germany.



## Technology

The 1990s were a revolutionary decade for digital technology. Individual personal computer ownership rose. Mobile phones of the early-1990s and earlier ones were very large, lacked extra features, and were used by only a few percent of the population of even the wealthiest nations. Only a few million people used online

services in 1990, and the World Wide Web, which would have a significant impact on technology for many decades, had only just been invented. The first web browser went online in 1993 and by 2001 more than 50% of some Western countries had Internet access, and more than 25% had mobile phone access.



**The Channel Tunnel**

The opening of the Channel Tunnel between France and the United Kingdom saw the commencement by the three national railway companies of Belgium, France and the United Kingdom, respectively SNCB/NMBS, SNCF and British Rail of the joint Eurostar service. Eurotunnel was created to manage and own the tunnel, which was finished in 1993, the official opening taking place on 6 May 1994. In addition to the tunnel's shuttle trains carrying cars and lorries between Folkestone and Calais, the tunnel opened up the possibility of through passenger and freight train services between places further afield

France had been operating high-speed TGV services since 1981, and had begun construction of a new high-speed line between Paris and the Channel Tunnel, LGV Nord; French TGV technology was chosen as the basis for the new trains. On 14 November 1994 Eurostar services began between Waterloo International station in London, Gare du Nord in Paris and Brussels South in Brussels.





In 1995 Eurostar was achieving an average end-to-end speed of 171.5 km/h (106.6 mph) between London and Paris. On 8 January 1996 Eurostar launched services from a second railway station in the UK when Ashford International was opened.



## Society

The 1990s represented continuing social liberalization in most countries, though coupled with an increase in the influence of capitalism, which would continue until the Great Recession of the late 2000s/early 2010s.

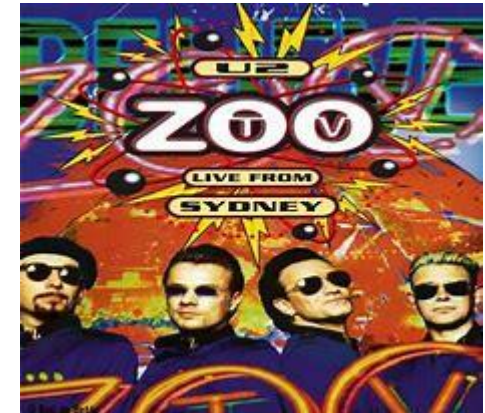
Youth culture in the 1990s responded to this by embracing both environmentalism and entrepreneurship. Western world fashions reflected this by often turning highly individualistic and/or counter-cultural, which was influenced by Generation X and early millennials: tattoos and body piercing gained popularity, and 'retro' styles inspired by fashions of the 1960s and 1970s were also prevalent. Some young people became increasingly involved in extreme sports and outdoor activities that combined embracing athletics with the appreciation of nature.

Those born from 1990 to 1996 are generally considered part of the Millennial Generation, along with those born in the 1980s, while those born from 1997 onward are often considered part of Generation Z, the post-Millennial generation.



## Music

The 1990s were a decade that saw marketing become more segmented, as MTV gradually shifted away from music videos and radio splintered into narrower formats aimed at various niches. However, the 1990s are perhaps best known for grunge, gangsta rap, R&B, teen pop; eurodance, electronic dance music, the renewed popularity of punk rock from the band Green Day and for the entrance of alternative rock into the mainstream. U2 was one of the most popular 1990s bands, their ground-breaking Zoo TV and Pop Mart tours were the top selling tours of 1992 and 1997.



Dr. Dre's 1992 album The Chronic provided a template for modern gangsta rap, and gave rise to other emerging artists of the genre, including Snoop Dogg. Hip hop became the bestselling music genre by the mid-1990s.

In the United Kingdom, the alternative rock Britpop genre emerged as part of the more general Cool Britannia culture, with Oasis, Blur, Pulp, Suede, Supergrass and Elastica.



The impact of boy band pop sensation Take That led to the formation of other boy bands in the UK and Ireland such as East 17 and Boyzone.

Female pop icons Spice Girls took the world by storm, becoming the most commercially successful British group since the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin. The global success of R&B

brought about a widespread scene of teen pop acts around the world such as All Saints, Backstreet Boys, Hanson, NSYNC, Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera who came to prominence into the new millennium. 1991 also saw the death of Queen frontman Freddie Mercury from AIDS-related pneumonia.





## Diana

The biggest news item of the 1990s was the death of Diana, Princess of Wales in the early hours of 31 August 1997. Diana died from the injuries she sustained in a car crash in the Pont de l'Alma tunnel in Paris, France. Dodi Fayed, the Egyptian film producer, and Henri Paul, the driver of the Mercedes-Benz W140 S-Class, were pronounced dead at the scene. Their bodyguard, Trevor Rees-Jones, was seriously injured, but survived the crash. Diana was 36 years old when she died. Her death caused an unprecedented outpouring of public grief in the United Kingdom and worldwide, and her funeral was watched by an estimated 2.5 billion people. The



Royal Family were criticised in the press for their reaction to Diana's death. Public interest in Diana has remained high and she has retained regular press coverage in the years after her death.



# 2000s

The growth of the Internet contributed to globalization during this decade, which allowed faster communication among people around the world; social networking sites arose as a new way for people to stay in touch from distant locations, as long as they had an internet connection. The first social networking sites were Friendster, Myspace, Facebook, and Twitter, established in 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2006, respectively. Myspace was the most popular social networking website until June 2009, when Facebook overtook it. E-mail continued to be popular throughout the decade and began to replace 'snail mail' as the primary way of sending letters and other messages to people in distant locations, though it had existed since 1971.



## Golden Jubilee

01-04 June 2002 was the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and the international celebration marking the 50th anniversary of the accession of Elizabeth II to the thrones of seven countries.

In her Golden Jubilee message, the Queen said that "this anniversary is for us an occasion to acknowledge with gratitude the loyalty and support which we have received from so many people since I came to the Throne in 1952. It is especially an opportunity to thank



all those of you who help others in your own local communities through public or voluntary service. I would like to think that your work will be particularly recognised during this Jubilee year. I hope also that this time of celebration in the United Kingdom and across the Commonwealth will not simply be an occasion to be nostalgic about the past. I believe that, young or old, we have as much to look forward to with confidence and hope as we have to look back on with pride".



## 9/11 Terror Attacks



These were a series of four coordinated suicide terrorist attacks carried out by the militant Islamic extremist network al-Qaeda against the United States. On the morning of Tuesday, 11 September 2001, nineteen terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners mid-flight while traveling to California. The attackers were organized into groups each with one designated flight-trained hijacker who took control of the aircraft. Their goal was to crash the planes into prominent American buildings, inflicting mass casualties and major structural damage. The hijackers successfully crashed the first two planes into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Centre in NY City, and the third plane into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. The fourth was intended to hit a government building in Washington, D.C., but instead crashed down in a field in Pennsylvania following a passenger revolt that foiled the attack. The attacks resulted in 2,977 fatalities, over 25,000 injuries, and substantial long-term health consequences, and \$10 billion in infrastructure damage. created a global economic recession. Many countries strengthened their anti-terrorism legislation and expanded the powers of law enforcement and intelligence agencies to prevent terrorist attacks.



## London's First Elected Mayor

The Mayor of London is an elected politician who, along with the London Assembly of 25 members, is accountable for the strategic government of Greater London. The role, created in 2000 after the London devolution referendum, was the first directly elected mayor in the United Kingdom.

The current mayor is Sadiq Khan, who took office on 9 May 2016. The position was held by Ken Livingstone from the creation of the role on 4 May 2000 until he was defeated in May 2008 by Boris Johnson, who then also served two terms before being succeeded by Khan.

The mayor is scrutinised by the London Assembly and, supported by their Mayoral Cabinet, directs the entirety of London, including the City of London (for which there is also the Lord Mayor of the City of London). Each London Borough also has a ceremonial mayor or, in Hackney, Lewisham, Newham and Tower Hamlets, an elected mayor.



## The Euro

A common currency for most EU member states, the euro, was established electronically in 1999, officially tying all the currencies of each participating nation to each other. The new currency was put into circulation in 2002 and the old currencies were phased out. Only three countries of the then 15 member states decided not to join the euro (the United Kingdom, Denmark and Sweden). In 2004 the EU undertook a major eastward enlargement, admitting 10 new member states (eight of which were former communist states). Two more, Bulgaria and Romania, joined in 2007, establishing a union of 27 nations.



The euro has since become the second largest reserve currency and the second most traded currency in the world after the US\$. As of October 2009, with more than €790 billion in circulation, the euro was the currency with the highest combined value of banknotes and coins in circulation in the world, having surpassed the US\$.

## Environment and Climate Change

*Climate change* and *global warming* became household words in the 2000s. Predictions tools made significant progress during the decade, UN-sponsored organisations such as the IPCC gained influence, and studies such as the Stern report influenced public support for paying the political and economic costs of countering climate change.



The global temperature kept climbing during the decade. In December 2009, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced that the 2000s might have been the warmest decade since records began in 1850, with four of the five warmest years since 1850 having occurred in this decade.

Major natural disasters became more frequent and helped change public opinion. One of the deadliest heat waves in human history happened during the 2000s, mostly in Europe, with the 2003 European heat wave killing 37,451 people over the summer months.

## Fashion

Fashion trends of the decade drew much inspiration from 1960s, 1970s and 1980s styles. Hair styles included the bleached and spiked hair for boys and men and long and straight hair for girls and women continued, as well as many other hairstyles from the mid-late 1990s. Kelly Clarkson made chunky highlights fashionable in 2002 on American Idol and lasted until about 2007. Both women and men highlighted their hair until the late 2000s.



The decade started with the futuristic fashion surrounding the new millennium. This dark, slinky style remained popular until 9/11 occurred and casual fashions had made a comeback once again. Baggy cargo pants were extremely popular among both sexes throughout the early and mid-2000s. Bell-bottoms were the dominant trouser style for women until about 2006 when fitted trousers began rising in popularity and boot-cut trousers and jeans became the standard among men until about 2008.

Skinny jeans then became a staple clothing for young women and men. By 2009 with the Jerkin' movement playing a large part in the popularization of skinny jeans. Mass brands Gap and Levi launched their own lines for skinny jeans.



‘Geek chic’ refers to a minor fashion trend that arose in the mid-2000s in which young individuals adopted stereotypically ‘geeky’ fashions, such as oversized black Horn-rimmed glasses. The glasses—worn with non-prescription lenses or without lenses—quickly became the defining aspect of the trend, with the media identifying various celebrities as ‘going geek’ for their wearing such glasses, such as David Beckham, Justin Timberlake and Myleene Klass.



Emo fashion became popular amongst teenagers for most of the 2000s, associated with the success of bands tied to the subculture like *My Chemical Romance*, *Fall Out Boy* and *Panic! at the Disco*. The style is commonly identified with wearing black/dark coloured skinny jeans, T-shirts bearing the name of emo music groups and long side-swept bangs, often covering one or both eyes.

Hip hop fashion was popular throughout the 2000s with clothing and shoe brands such as Nike, Fubu, and Air Jordan. Followers of Hip Hop wore oversized shorts, jewellery and T-shirts. By the late 2000s this gave way more to fitted and vibrantly coloured clothing, with men wearing skinny jeans.

## Music

In the 2000s, the Internet allowed consumers unprecedented access to music. The Internet also allowed more artists to distribute music relatively inexpensively and independently without the previously necessary financial support of a record label. Music sales began to decline following the year 2000, a state of affairs generally attributed to unlicensed uploading and downloading of sound files to the Internet, a practice which became more widely prevalent during this time.

In the 2000s, hip hop reached a commercial peak and heavily influenced various aspects of popular culture, dominating the musical landscape of the decade. The best-selling musical artist of the decade was American rapper Eminem, who sold 32 million albums.





# 2010s

The decade began amid a global financial crisis and subsequent international recession dating from the late 2000s. The resulting European sovereign-debt crisis became more pronounced early in the decade and continued to affect the possibility of a global economic recovery. Economic issues, such as austerity, inflation, and an increase in commodity prices, led to unrest in many countries. Unrest in some countries—particularly in the Arab world—evolved into socioeconomic crises triggering revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain as well as civil wars in Libya, Syria, and Yemen in a regional phenomenon commonly referred to as the Arab Spring. Shifting social attitudes saw LGBT rights and female representation make substantial progress during the decade, particularly in the West.

## Diamond Jubilee

The year 2012 marked the Diamond Jubilee of Elizabeth II being the 60th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II on 6 February 1952. The only diamond jubilee celebration for any of Elizabeth's predecessors was in 1897, for the 60th anniversary of the accession of Queen Victoria.



Following the tradition of the Queen's Silver and Golden Jubilees, commemorative events were held throughout the Commonwealth of Nations.



In comparison to the previous Golden Jubilee, events in the United Kingdom were significantly scaled back due to the economic policies of the governing Conservative Party deeming excessive cost to the taxpayer amidst widespread austerity as inappropriate.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh toured the United Kingdom and other members of the royal family toured the rest of the Commonwealth as the monarch's representatives. The Jubilee celebrations marked the beginning of the withdrawal of the Duke of Edinburgh from public life and a more prominent role for the Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry in Commonwealth affairs.

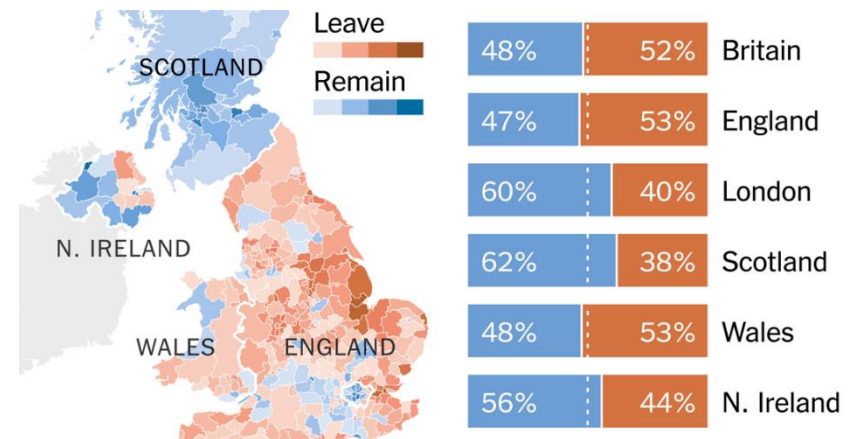
Numerous events and tributes were held over the year and throughout the Commonwealth, culminating in a jubilee pageant held in London. The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust was set up as a charitable foundation with a mission to leave a lasting legacy. Other projects included the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood and the issuing of commemorative medals.





## The European Union

The European Union went through several crises. The European debt crisis caused severe economic problems to several eurozone member states, most severely Greece. The 2015 migration crisis led to several million people entering the EU illegally in a short period of time. There was a significant rise in the vote shares of several Eurosceptic parties, including the League in Italy, Alternative for Germany, and the Finns Party in Finland. As a result of a referendum, the United Kingdom became the first member state in the EU's history to initiate proceedings for leaving the Union.



The United Kingdom European Union membership referendum, commonly referred to as the EU referendum or the Brexit referendum, took place on 23 June 2016 in the United Kingdom (UK) and Gibraltar to ask the electorate whether the country should remain a member of, or leave, the European Union (EU). It was organised and facilitated through the European Union Referendum Act 2015 and the Political Parties,

Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The referendum resulted in 51.9% of the votes cast being in favour of leaving the EU. Although the referendum was legally non-binding, the government of the time promised to implement the result.

Immediately after the result, financial markets reacted negatively worldwide, and Cameron announced that he would resign as Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party, having campaigned unsuccessfully to remain in the European Union. It was the first time that a national referendum result had gone against the preferred option of the UK Government. Cameron was succeeded by Theresa May on 13 July 2016. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn also faced a



leadership challenge as a result of the EU referendum. Parliament gave legal effect to the referendum by passing the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Act 2017 and on 29 March 2017, the United



Kingdom gave formal notice of intent to withdraw from the EU.

## Donald Trump

Donald John Trump is an American politician, media personality, and businessman who served as the 45th president of the United States from 2017 to 2021. Trump's political positions have been described as populist, protectionist, isolationist, and nationalist. He won the 2016 United States presidential election as the Republican nominee against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton but lost the popular vote, becoming the first U.S. president with no prior military or government service. His election and policies sparked numerous protests. The 2017–2019 special counsel investigation established that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to benefit the Trump campaign, but not, that members of the Trump campaign conspired or coordinated with Russia. Trump made many false and misleading statements during his campaigns and presidency, to a degree unprecedented in American politics, and promoted conspiracy theories.



Trump lost the 2020 presidential election to Joe Biden but refused to concede, falsely claiming widespread electoral fraud and attempting to overturn the results by pressuring government officials, mounting scores of unsuccessful legal challenges, and obstructing the presidential transition. On January 6, 2021, Trump urged his supporters to march to the Capitol, which many of them then attacked, resulting in multiple deaths and interrupting the electoral vote count.



Trump is the only federal officeholder in American history to have been impeached twice. After he pressured Ukraine to investigate Biden in 2019, he was impeached by the House of Representatives for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress in December. The Senate acquitted him of both charges in February 2020. The House of Representatives impeached Trump a second time in January 2021, for incitement of insurrection. The Senate acquitted him in February, after he had already left office.





**HRM Queen Elizabeth II has lived through so many major changes during her life and her reign. She is the longest-reigning British monarch, and since she ascended the throne in 1953, both the UK and the world have changed remarkably.**

### **British Empire and Commonwealth**

What was once a sprawling British Empire at the start of Elizabeth's reign became a Commonwealth of independent nations.

During the Sixties, the country gave up colony after colony and now, Elizabeth is the monarch of 16 countries known as the Commonwealth realms.

To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give myself heart and soul every day of my life."





## Turbulent Troubles

At the time of Elizabeth's coronation, Northern Ireland was ruled by Protestant unionists who favoured remaining part of the UK for decades. The Catholic minority in Northern Ireland found themselves at a greater disadvantage economically and politically compared with Protestant community, and in 1968, tensions over whether Northern Ireland should become part of the Republic of Ireland exploded.



During the 30-year conflict that cost the lives of more than 3,500 people, the country saw an increase in violent attacks, bombings, acts of terrorism and assassinations — one of the most high-profile victims of IRA attacks was Lord Louis Mountbatten, a cousin of the Queen. Despite ongoing protests and threats, Her Majesty visited Northern Ireland during her Silver

Jubilee tour in 1977.

Peace talks began in the early nineties and eventually, in 1998, the conflict ended with the Good Friday Agreement.

## Women in power

The Queen has seen fourteen British prime ministers during her reign, one of whom was Margaret Thatcher — the first woman elected to the position. Despite their differences, the two women developed a mutual respect for each other. Her Majesty honoured Thatcher with the Order of Merit, which she bestows upon only 24 living people.



In 2013, she attended the former prime minister's funeral in a break from royal protocol, which advises that monarchs do not attend the funerals of commoners. It was a final display of the Queen's deep respect for Thatcher and the important connection they shared.

The presence of female leaders has grown since Thatcher's time in office, and according to the United Nations' UN Women division, 26 women were serving as Heads of State and/or Government in 24 countries as of September 1, 2021.

## Technological takeover

Despite initial reluctance, the Queen decided to go ahead with the live broadcast of her 1953 coronation: it was a controversial choice that marked a significant change in the monarchy's attitude toward the media.

While she has upheld many of the Royal Family's traditions, the Queen has not shied away from progress. She recorded her first Christmas message in 1957, sent her first email in 1976 and uploaded her first Instagram post in 2019.

In recent years, she has embraced technology to keep up with her royal obligations. As the coronavirus pandemic swept the globe, we all adapted to a new way of working.

Nicknamed the 'Zoom monarch', Her Majesty has been fulfilling her constitutional duties with the aid of video technology — she often carries out her engagements from her home in Windsor Castle. In the height of the first lockdown in the UK, the Queen addressed the country with a broadcast designed to reassure and inspire. Concluding the broadcast, she said: "Better days will return".

