

Period	Dates	Historical events	Linguistic characteristics	Spelling
Old English 450-1000	443	Romans leave Britain	<b>Phonology:</b> velar fricatives, short/long vowel contrast, /sk/ onset clusters borrowed from Old Norse <b>Morphology:</b> robust inflectional system with case marking, noun gender, verbal agreement <b>Syntax:</b> Germanic; SOV in embedded clauses <b>Vocabulary:</b> Mostly Germanic; a few Latinate borrowings for religious words, Celtic place names, some common Old Norse words	Use of þ, ð, æ. No k, v, j. Velar fricative represented with h, palatal fricative with sc, front rounded vowel with y.
	449	Angles, Saxons, Jutes arrive, drive out Celtic Britons		
	790-880	Viking raiding, Danelaw in northern Britain		
	871-899	King Alfred defeats Danes, orders Old English to be written		
	1016-1042	Danish rule of England		
1066-1200	1066	Norman conquest, French becomes official language of government	<b>Vocabulary:</b> Old Norse pronouns <i>she, they, their, them</i> established in English	
Middle English 1200-1400	1200	King John loses lands, titles in Normandy	<b>Phonology:</b> reduction of unstressed vowels <b>Morphology:</b> loss of gender, noun class, most of case system <b>Syntax:</b> SVO order begins to emerge as dominant <b>Vocabulary:</b> approx 10,000 borrowings from Norman French,	loss of þ, ð, æ. Appearance of th, sh, gh for interdental, palatal, velar fricatives, ch for palatal affricate. Respelling of <i>love, come, woman</i> with o for readability.
	1362	English becomes the official language of government		
	1387-1400	Chaucer writes Canterbury tales		
1400-1500	1476	Caxton brings moveable-type press to England	Great vowel shift occurring	Spelling begins to be standardized
Early Modern English 1500-1750	1564	Shakespeare born	<b>Phonology, Morphology, Syntax:</b> Relatively stable. GVS completed in various dialects at different times during this period. Final remnants of complex inflectional system disappear. SVO word order firmly established. <b>Vocabulary:</b> Rampant borrowing from Greek and Latin for scientific, scholarly and technological terms; coining of new Greek and Latin words using never-before combined roots. Continued cultural borrowing from French & Italian, names for imported goods and ideas from Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, American Indian Languages, Hindi, and other colonial languages.	Some new spelling conventions borrowed with Greek and Latin roots (ps for /s/, ph for /f/, etc.) Alteration of some spellings to mirror their Latin roots ( <i>debt, island</i> , etc.) Spelling standardization established.
	1583	First British overseas colony		
	1600	East India Company founded		
	1607	Jamestown colony founded		
	1600-1700	General flowering of English scholarship, both literary and scientific.		
	1755	Johnson's <i>Dictionary</i> published		

to come: further readings, problem sets