

MEDIEVAL CASTLE VOCABULARY

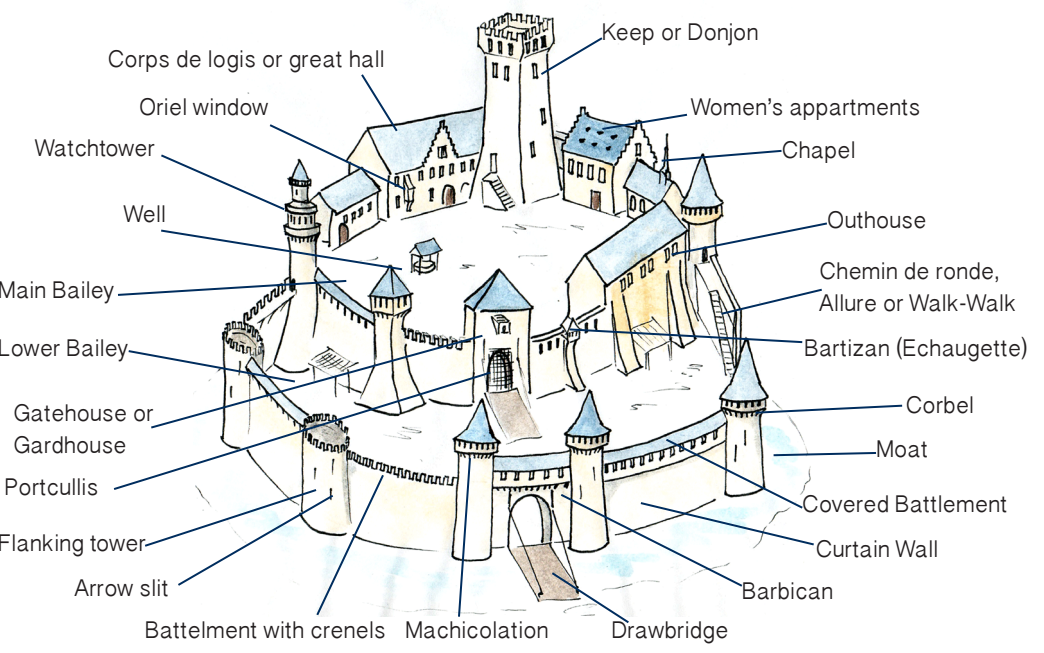
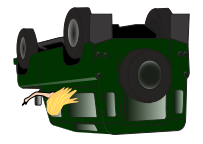
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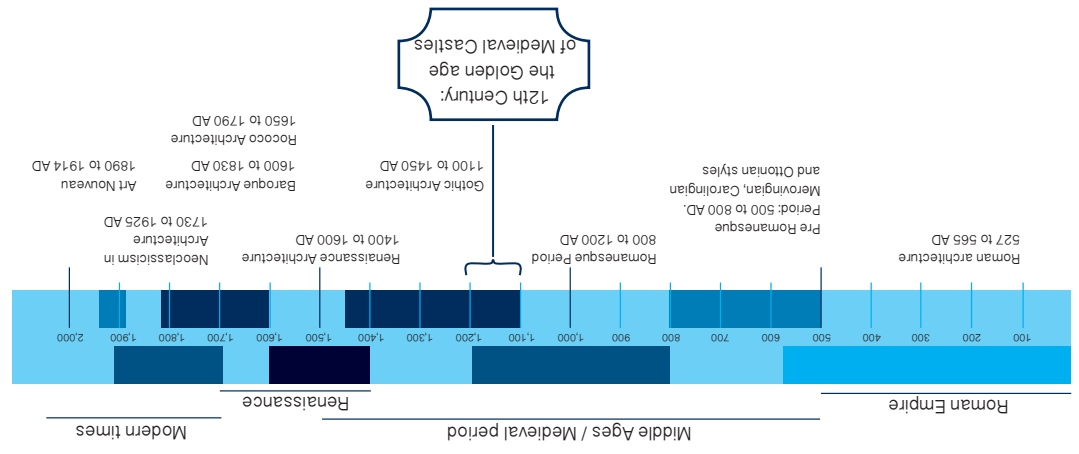
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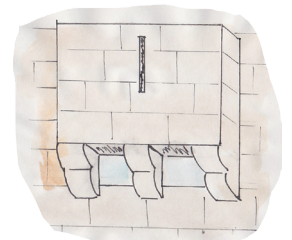
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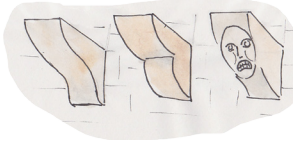
ARCHITECTURAL STYLES TIMELINE



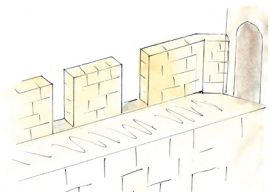
A Castle is the private fortified residence of a lord or noble. Often built on an acote, an earthen mound with a flat top, or a prominent rock formation. Early Castles were often wooden constructions guarded by a palisade and tower. The first keep or donjon built from stones, appeared in the 10th century. This is the great tower and usually the most strongly defended point of a Castle. The Golden age of Medieval Castle is considered to be the 12th Century. In the 13th Century, defensive features were added to existing Castles, like towers, gateways, and curtain walls. Castle construction started to fade by the 15th-16th centuries, but existing Castles did not necessarily all fall out of use.



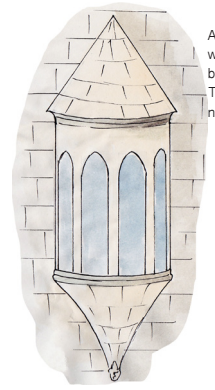
A **machicolation** is a floor opening between the supporting corbels of a battlement, through which stones, or other objects, could be dropped on attackers at the base of a defensive wall.



A **corbel** or **console** is a structural piece of stone. It often has a plain appearance, but can also be carved with stylised heads of humans, animals or imaginary beasts. You can see lots of them in Castles, often hanging from walls, where they supported the beams of a ceiling which has since collapsed.



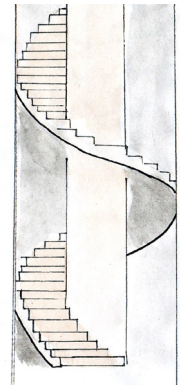
A **merlon** is the solid upright section of a battlement or crenellated parapet in medieval architecture. The space between two merlons is called a **crenel**, and a succession of merlons and crenels is a **crenellation**.



An **oriel window** is a form of bay window which projects from the main wall of a building but does not reach the ground. These could be used as small chapels, as no one was allowed to live above God.



An **arrow slit** is a thin vertical aperture through which archers were launching arrows. It is alternatively referred to as an arrow loop, loop hole, or archere, and sometimes a balistraria. Arrow slits come in a remarkable variety. A common form is the cross. Another common form is the thin vertical opening with a round hole at the bottom which enabled canons to be fired.



Staircases were often curved very narrowly and in a clockwise direction. This meant that any attackers coming up the stairs had their sword hands (right hand) against the interior curve of the wall and this made it very difficult for them to swing their swords. Defenders had their sword hands on the outside wall, which meant they had more room to swing.