



## Cathedral Timeline

636	King Cenwalh builds first Christian church in Winchester. It is a small, cross-shaped building, and soon becomes a cathedral, housing the throne (cathedra) of the bishop who looks after a huge area of churches from the English Channel to the River Thames. Some of the earliest Anglo Saxon Kings are buried in the cathedral (we now call this the Old Minster) over the next few centuries, including Alfred the Great and later Canute (Cnut).
860	Winchester city and the cathedral church are attacked by Vikings, but survive.
863	Bishop Swithun, the patron saint of the cathedral, dies and is buried in front of the West Door of the Old Minster.
879	Vikings attack the city and the church and monastery for a second time. Again, the cathedral and monastery survive.
901	New Minster, the second cathedral church on site (started by King Alfred, finished by his son Edward) is completed. It stands next to the Old Minster, which is still in use.
971	The bones of St Swithun, a former bishop, are dug up from the Old Minster forecourt and are moved into a splendid new shrine inside the building, Pilgrims travel many miles to visit his shrine, and the walls are hung with the crutches of people he has miraculously healed.
1000	By now, the Old Minster is a multi-purpose building – a cathedral, a monastery (with monks who run the church, pray and worship here), a healing place of pilgrimage and the final resting place of Saxon Kings.
1066/1070	William the Conqueror invades England, and starts putting his own Norman bishops into the Anglo Saxon churches. In 1070, he installs his friend and relative Bishop Wakelin as Bishop of Winchester.
1079	Work on building a new, more impressive Norman style cathedral begins.
1093	On 15 <sup>th</sup> July, the new cathedral is consecrated (blessed and put into use). The bones of St Swithun and the early Kings are brought into the building. Nearly all of the Bishops and Abbots (head monks of monasteries) of England attend the opening. The next day, the last part of the Old Minster is demolished.
1100	William II (William Rufus) is killed by an arrow whilst hunting in the New Forest, and is buried in Winchester Cathedral.
1160	The beautifully illuminated Winchester Bible is commissioned. It is

	written on 468 sheets of calf-skin parchment and copied out by one monk who spends 5 years working on it. Six different artists work on the beautiful drawings and initials, but it's never finished.
14 <sup>th</sup> Century	The round Norman arches in the cathedral are remodelled into the new architectural fashion - high, soaring gothic style.
1538	Henry VIII's men break into the cathedral to destroy St Swithun's shrine and the monastery is dissolved (closed). The church remains open as a cathedral, but the monks no longer serve there as holy brothers (some stay on as staff).
1554	On 25 <sup>th</sup> July, Queen Mary I marries Prince Philip of Spain in the cathedral.
1640's	Soldiers fighting for Oliver Cromwell during the English Civil War stable their horses in the cathedral and deliberately damage the medieval stained glass around the building, as well as add graffiti to the walls, break bits off of statues and knock over the Mortuary Chests containing the bones of early Kings.
1660's	The cathedral is in a terrible state of disrepair at the end of the Civil War. The townspeople have saved what medieval glass they can, and now the broken bits of stained glass are set back into the giant West Window. There is not enough to rebuild every window in the cathedral, so some are re-glazed with plain glass.
1817	Famous female writer Jane Austen dies in Winchester at the age of 41, and is buried in the cathedral. Her gravestone makes no mention of the fact she was a well-known novelist, but extra memorials are added later to celebrate her writing.
1854	The cathedral pipe organ is installed. It has 6,000 pipes of different sizes.
1900's	Large cracks begin to appear in the walls and vaulted ceilings of the cathedral, and chunks of stone regularly break off. The walls are leaning outwards and something needs to be done to stop the building from falling down.
1906	William Walker, a deep sea diver is employed to start work to stop the cathedral from falling down. He works for 6 hours a day, for 6 years in complete darkness, in water-filled trenches under the cathedral using his hands to feel the way. He stacks up concrete bags so the water flooding the cathedral (causing the building to fall apart) can later be pumped out and strong foundations built.
2012	The cathedral is awarded a large grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to do make some repairs to the leaking roof and stained glass windows, conserve the building fabric, install some new exhibitions about the cathedral and refurbish the Learning Centre.