ROMAN.AGES.IM · FREE FACT SHEET

Hadrian's Wall

73 miles, or 80 Roman miles, and a wall ordered in AD 122.

English Heritage says the emperor Hadrian, visiting Britain in AD 122, ordered a wall to stretch from sea to sea, as a permanent frontier to Britannia. It was mostly complete by AD 130.

The official figure	What the page says
When	Ordered in AD 122. Mostly complete by AD 130. It took at least six years to build. In 2022 English Heritage celebrated 1,900 years of the wall.
How long	73 miles (or 80 Roman miles), from Bowness-on-Solway to Wallsend. A Roman mile was a thousand paces of five Roman feet.
How high	The tallest remaining parts stand about 15 feet (4.6 m).
How wide	Planned 10 Roman feet (3 m) wide; built 8 Roman feet (2.4 m) or less.
Who built it	Almost entirely the Second Legion (Caerleon), the Sixth (York) and the Twentieth (Chester).
What it is	A complex of wall, earthwork, ditch, roads, forts, milecastles and turrets. UNESCO World Heritage Site, 1987.

A later wall, the Antonine Wall, was built from around AD 142 on the Forth–Clyde isthmus and gradually abandoned between AD 158 and AD 164. Hadrian's Wall remained the effective imperial frontier.

Three questions

1. In which year did Hadrian visit Britain and order the wall?
2. What two official figures does the FAQ give for its length?
3. What happened to the Antonine Wall?

Answers: AD 122. 73 miles (or 80 Roman miles). It was gradually abandoned between AD 158 and AD 164.

Sources: English Heritage, An introduction to Roman Britain; Hadrian's Wall facts and FAQs (checked by Dr Frances McIntosh, updated 6 March 2026); 7 ingenious things the Romans brought to Britain. Checked 17 November 2026. roman.ages.im is independent of English Heritage. No photographs are included on this sheet.

ReallyByte — Fun. Educational. Useless.