

Minster Navigators

Journey through time



Self-guided tour of York Minster



4 Chapter House

This is where the **Dean** and **Chapter** had meetings and it is still used on occasions today. It was built around the year 1280 and the big wooden doors you can see date from that period. Sit down on one of the stone seats and look all around you. How many sides does the Chapter House have?

The floor tiles are more modern and date from the 19th century. Can you find St Peter's keys in the tiles? If you look up, you will also see some keys painted on the ceiling.



Can you see the intricate carvings of leaves and creatures all around you? See if you can draw one of them in the box. Now move around and find some different carvings. Which is your favourite?



5 Quire Screen

The Quire Screen dates from around 1450 and is decorated with kings who reigned during the time the Minster was built. If work on the Minster began shortly after the Norman Conquest, who do you think will be the first king on your left? Check the writing at the foot of the king to see if you are right! What do you think the number after the name represents? (Clue: reg is the Latin word for reign).



Which king would you say was an odd one out? There are several possible answers! Talk to a friend and see if they have a different answer to you.

6 The Quire

The Quire is the most important part of the Cathedral and is where the choir sing and services take place. The wooden seats and organ pipes date from the 19th Century following a fire in 1829. A man called Jonathan Martin set fire to the Minster because he thought God told him to do so in a dream. He suffered with his mental health and he was also very critical of the Church. He thought God was going to punish the priests because they were greedy and drank too much wine!

There were many consequences of the 1829 fire. Circle the one you think might have had the greatest impact on the Minster.

1. The Dean and Chapter said the Minster needed a watchman day and night. This became the Minster Police who still work here today.
2. Jonathan Martin was locked up for the rest of his life.
3. Many tombs were destroyed in the fire along with the organ, organ music and choir stalls.
4. John Browne used the scaffolding from the fire restoration to draw illustrations of the Nave bosses.



Compare your opinions with your friends. Do you agree with each other? Could you give a reason for your point of view?

7 Great East Window

Have a seat and look up at this fabulous window. It represents the beginning and end of all things. God is seated at the top followed by images of the creation story in the first book of the Bible, Genesis. The window then focuses on the end of the world with stories from the last book of the Bible, Revelation (the Apocalypse). Can you spot this picture of God creating the fish and birds, high up in the middle of the window?



The window was created in 1405 and designed by a man called John Thornton. We still have a copy of his contract that tells us John was paid £56 which included a £10 bonus. This would have been many thousands of pounds in today's money.

8 South Transept

Look up at the bosses on the South Transept roof. Can you spot a spaceman or a whale? In 1984 lightning struck the Minster. It set on fire and the roof was entirely destroyed. When it was rebuilt, the BBC programme Blue Peter launched a competition for children to design new roof bosses based on what was important to them. There are six of these on the roof above you and they show that the Minster is still changing and evolving today.



Well done for completing your navigation of York Minster!

If you haven't already done so, complete your timeline of the Minster and reveal how it has changed over time.

Word Bank

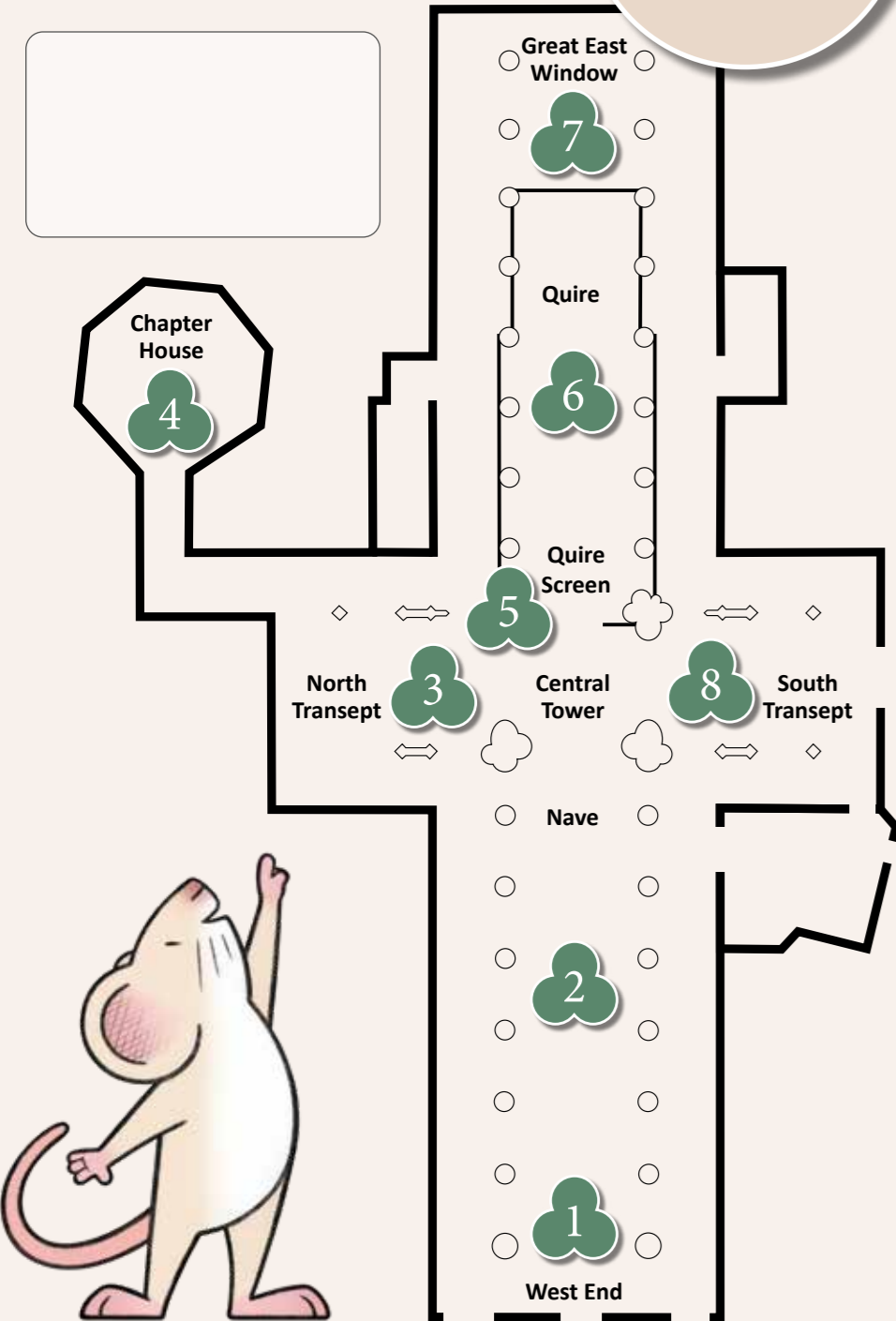
- Apocalypse** The Greek word meaning 'revelation' and the name of the last book of the Bible which talks about the end of the world.
- Bible** The Holy Book of Christians.
- Boss** A wooden or stone carving on the ceiling that pins the beams together and covers the join.
- Cathedral** Usually a large church that has the seat of the Bishop.
- Chapter** The committee who run the Cathedral, the people who make the decisions.
- Cistercians** A group of monks who wanted to reform the Church and lived very simply.
- Crusades** Where Christians from Europe travelled to Jerusalem and other holy places to fight Muslims in the 11th – 13th centuries.
- Dean** The priest who is in charge of running the Minster.
- Minster** A church built in Anglo-Saxon times that spread the teachings of Christianity. It has come to mean a large or important church.
- Nave** The large, open part of a church or cathedral where services often take place. Navis is the Latin for ship.
- Relics** Small items important to medieval Christians such as a piece of wood from the cross of Christ or bones or hair from a saint.
- Revelation** The last book of the Bible, also called the Apocalypse.

Welcome to York Minster, one of the most beautiful Christian buildings in the country with a history stretching back to the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans. York Minster continues to be an awesome place of worship where people come to pray, learn and experience the presence of God.

Take a minute to stop and look up. What are your first impressions of the building?

What words could you use to describe what you can see?

If you see a word in **bold>, you can check the meaning in the word bank on the back of this guide.**



1 The West End

In AD 71 the Romans arrived in York and Roman remains have been discovered below this building. The first York Minster was built in 627 by King Edwin of Northumbria. The **Minster** was damaged by fires, Viking attacks and the Norman Conquest. However, in 1080, William the Conqueror sent Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux to York to build a huge new Norman Minster which was completed in 1100. This would have had a lower ceiling and fewer windows than you can see today. Around 1225 Archbishop Walter de Grey began to transform this building into a Gothic **Minster** and the building was finally declared finished in 1472.

You can tell that this building is 'Gothic' because it has pointed arches, high ceilings, detailed carvings and large windows. Look carefully at the shape and patterns on the arches. Can you draw one here?

How many arches can you count in 30 seconds? Get a friend to time you and write your answer here.



Behind you between the massive doors you will find St Peter carrying a key. The Minster is dedicated to St Peter, and his keys represent the keys to heaven. He is important because he led the early Christian Church after Jesus died. You will find many keys throughout the Minster on your voyage through time.



2 The Nave

The Nave is the large space in the centre of the building. Look up at the ceiling. Can you see the round gold shapes above you? These are called **bosses**. In 1840 they were all destroyed by a huge fire. A clock mender called William Groves accidentally started the fire with a candle in the Bell Tower. Fortunately an artist called John Browne had recently drawn all of the bosses which meant that after the fire they could be reproduced accurately.

Can you see the red and gold dragon? It probably dates to when the Nave was built in the early 14th Century. It has a hinge and can move up and down. It also has a hole in the neck. What do you think the dragon was for? (Answer below).



Answer: We don't actually know! One theory is that it lifted the heavy lid of either a baptism font or a casket containing **relics** of the saints.

3 The Five Sisters Window

This mountain of glass dating from 1250 is one of our oldest medieval windows. In 1925 it was dedicated to women who died in the First World War. The window contains detailed geometric shapes. Can you spot a different pattern in each of the tall windows called 'lights'?

There are different stories about this window. Read the theories and evidence below and choose the one you find most convincing.



1 The window is named after 5 sisters known for their beautiful embroidery. The geometric patterns are based on their designs.

Evidence: The Five Sisters of York are first mentioned in a history book called Eboracum which was published in 1736. Their story was then told in more detail in a novel by Charles Dickens around a century later.

2 The window is named after **Cistercian** monks who influenced this plain, geometric style of glass.

Evidence: We know that the **Cistercians** were important religious people in this area and they had similar windows in their churches. They had also banned colour or images in their glass because it distracted people from focusing on God. 'Sisters' could be short for 'Cistercians'.

3 The window was influenced by Islamic art.

Evidence: In Islam, geometric patterns are sometimes used to decorate holy books and buildings and the Five Sisters window was created around the time people were visiting the Middle East for the **Crusades**.

Which theory did you find the most convincing? Write the number in the box and ask a friend if they agree with you.

Timeline

You can complete this timeline as you travel or fill it in at the end of your journey.

Who arrived in York?	Which King built the Anglo-Saxon Minster?	How many years did it take to build the Norman Minster?	Roughly how long did the Gothic transformation of York Minster take? 20 Years? <input type="checkbox"/> 200 years? <input type="checkbox"/> 250 years? <input type="checkbox"/>	How many sisters?	Draw a mathematical shape to represent the Chapter House.	How many Kings are on the Quire Screen?	Why is this year important for the Minster?	Which area of the Minster was set on fire?	Draw a picture of what caused this fire.	What was designed by children following this fire?
AD 71	627	1080	1225	1250	1280	1450	1472	1829	1840	1984