

Castles vocabulary

Alcázar – a Spanish palace or fortress built during the period of Moorish rule.

Archer – a soldier who fights using a bow and arrows.

Arrow slit – a narrow vertical opening in a castle wall for shooting arrows through.

Bailey – an enclosed courtyard within a castle's outer walls.

Battlements – the defensive wall at the top of a castle with alternating high and low sections.

Creditor – a person or institution to whom money is owed.

Crossbow – a weapon that shoots short arrows (bolts) using a mechanical trigger.

Debtor – a person who owes money to someone else.

Drawbridge – a movable bridge over a moat that can be raised or lowered.

Earthworks – large artificial banks or mounds of earth used for defence.

Embrasure – an opening in a wall, wider on the inside, for shooting weapons through.

Estuary – the wide part of a river where it meets the sea.

Exchequer – the government department responsible for managing public money and accounts.

Fortification – a defensive wall or building designed to protect against attack.

Moat – a deep, wide ditch surrounding a castle, often filled with water.

Motte – an artificial earthen mound with a tower on top.

Murder hole – an opening in a gateway ceiling for dropping objects on attackers below.

Obsolete – no longer useful or needed because something newer exists.

Palisade – a strong fence made from wooden stakes, used for defence.

Portcullis – a heavy iron or wooden grille that drops down to block a gateway.

Reconquista – the period when Christian kingdoms gradually recaptured Spain from Moorish rule.

Scullion – a servant who performed menial kitchen tasks like washing dishes.

Siege – a military operation where an army surrounds a fortified place to force surrender.

Splayed – widened or spread outwards from a narrow opening.

Stronghold – a fortified place that is well defended and difficult to attack.

Tally stick – a wooden stick with notches used to record financial transactions.

Turret – a small tower projecting from a castle wall