

TOP 5 ACTIVITIES

DESIGNING DEAL

AT THE CASTLE

Recommended For

KS2 & KS3
(History, Maths, Design
and Technology)

Learning Objectives

- Investigate the design, shapes and patterns at Deal Castle.
- Explore some details of Deal Castle's defensive structure.



An aerial view of Deal Castle showing 12 bastions arranged around the central tower.

ACTIVITY 1

Summary

Before your visit, show students some photos of Deal Castle, which you can find on our website. Ask them to think of some words to describe the shape, size and appearance of the castle.

Deal Castle's design was very different from traditional medieval castles, which generally had high outer walls to protect the people and buildings inside. However, these walls were found to be too weak to resist gunfire after the development of heavy guns (cannon) in the mid 1300s. Military engineers were therefore forced to design a new type of fort that had very thick, squat walls, making them less of a target and able to withstand gunfire.

During your visit, take students inside the keep and find the interactive model in the 'Building the Castle' area. Ask students to carefully piece the model together, paying close attention to the patterns and shapes used to build the castle.

You could ask them some of these questions:

1. Which bit is the central circular tower known as the 'keep'?
2. How many semi-circular bastions are arranged around the keep?
3. How did the shape and height of Deal Castle help to defend it?
4. The castle could mount about 45 heavy guns over four tiers—where would you put the guns to ensure all-round, top-to-bottom, defence?

Once they have finished building, please ask students to carefully take the model apart and put the pieces back in the box, for others to enjoy.

ACTIVITY 1 continued



A cannon on the outer bastion at Deal Castle.

Back in the classroom, students could design their own Tudor castle, using Deal as inspiration. They should try to include the following features in their design:

- A central circular tower
- Semi-circular bastions arranged symmetrically around the central tower
- A gatehouse in one of the outer bastions
- Thick, squat walls, making the castle less of a target

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Compare Deal Castle with some of the other Tudor artillery forts Henry VIII built along the south coast, including Walmer, Calshot, Pendennis and St Mawes. You can find photos of these on the English Heritage website.

