

# English articles

It's useful to read articles in English, even if you don't understand every word - it will help you increase your vocabulary and keep up to date with things happening in English-speaking countries!

*This page will be updated on **Mondays**. The first article is aimed at a B1 and upwards level and the second article is aimed at a B2 and upwards level*

## Articles of the week



### Macron says France and Britain will 'save Europe' as he starts a state visit to the UK



By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday urged Britain to stick close to its neighbors despite its exit from the European Union, saying France and the U.K. will “save Europe” by

standing for democracy, law and international order in a dangerous world.

On a state visit that mixed royal pageantry with tough political talks on Ukraine and migration, Macron said Europe must strengthen its economy and defenses and reduce its dependence “on both the U.S. and China.”

Macron's three-day trip, at the invitation of King Charles III, is the first state visit to the U.K. by a European Union head of state since Brexit, and a symbol of the U.K. government's desire to reset relations with the bloc after Britain acrimoniously left the EU in 2020.

Macron addressed members of both houses of Britain's Parliament packed into the building's ornate Royal Gallery. He said the two countries represent “a world order based on law, justice and respect for territorial integrity, an order that is today being attacked on a daily basis.”

“The United Kingdom and France must once again show the world that our alliance can make all the difference,” Macron said, adding that “we will save Europe by our example and our solidarity.”

He said that even though Britain has left the EU, “the United Kingdom cannot stay on the sidelines. Because defense and security, competitiveness, democracy — the very core of our identity — are connected across Europe as a continent.”

## **Pomp and politics**

The French president and his wife, Brigitte Macron, were treated to the full force of British ceremonial charm, a far cry from the chilly relations of 2022, when then-Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said that the “jury is out” on whether Macron was a friend or a foe.

The Macrons were greeted at London's RAF Northolt air base by Prince William and his wife Catherine — wearing a dress by French design house Christian Dior — before being met by King Charles and Queen Camilla in Windsor, west of London. They were driven to the almost 1,000-year-old royal residence of Windsor Castle in horse-drawn carriages, through streets bedecked in Union Jacks and French tricolor flags.

The king and queen hosted a banquet for the Macrons at Windsor Castle on Tuesday evening, with 160 guests including politicians, diplomats and celebrities such as Mick Jagger and Elton John. They were served summer vegetables, chicken with asparagus and iced blackcurrant parfait, along with Champagne and a gin-infused cocktail called L'entente, after the “entente cordiale” struck between Britain and France in 1904.

As monarch, Charles is expected to be above politics, but he spoke about the support Britain and France give Ukraine “in defense of our shared values,” noted the challenge of “irregular migration across the English Channel” and said the two countries face “complex threats, emanating from multiple directions.

“As friends and as allies, we face them together,” Charles said.

## **New tactics to stop boats**

Politics will take center stage on Wednesday, when Macron sits down for talks with U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer on migration, defense and investment — including a 12.5% stake by French energy firm EDF in a new nuclear power plant planned for eastern England.

Macron also came bearing a tantalizing cultural gift: an agreement to send the Bayeux Tapestry to

Britain for the first time in more than 900 years. The 70-meter (230-foot) tapestry showing the Norman conquest of England in 1066 will go on display at the British Museum from September 2026 to July 2027.

At talks Wednesday and a U.K.-France summit on Thursday, Macron and Starmer will discuss ways to stop migrants from crossing the English Channel in small boats and try to advance plans for a post-ceasefire security force for Ukraine, despite apparent U.S. indifference to the idea and Russia's refusal to halt the onslaught on its neighbor.

Britain receives fewer asylum-seekers than Mediterranean European countries, but thousands of migrants each year use northern France as a launching point to reach the U.K., either by stowing away in trucks or — after a clampdown on that route — in small boats across one of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

The U.K. has struck a series of deals with France over the years to increase patrols of beaches and share intelligence in an attempt to disrupt the smuggling gangs.

It has all had only a limited impact. About 37,000 people were detected crossing the English Channel in small boats in 2024, and more than 20,000 people made the crossing in the first six months of 2025, up by about 50% from the same period last year. Dozens of people have died trying to cross.

British officials have been pushing for French police to intervene more forcefully to stop the boats, and welcomed the sight of officers slashing rubber dinghies with knives in recent days.

France is also considering a U.K. proposal for a “one-in, one-out” deal that would see France take back some migrants who reached Britain, in return for the U.K. accepting some of those in France.

Macron said the leaders would try “to fix today what is a burden for our two countries.”

“France and the U.K. have a shared responsibility to address irregular migration with humanity, solidarity and fairness,” he said.

### **Keeping Ukraine in focus**

Starmer and Macron have worked closely together to rally support for Ukraine, though they have taken contrasting approaches to U.S. President Donald Trump, with Macron more willing to challenge the American president than the emollient Starmer. Britain and France have led efforts to form an international peacekeeping force for Ukraine to reinforce a future ceasefire with European troops and equipment and U.S. security guarantees.

Trump has shown little enthusiasm for the idea, however, and a ceasefire remains elusive. British officials say the “coalition of the willing” idea is alive and well, with Macron and Starmer due to join an international videoconference on Thursday to discuss planning for the force.

Macron said the coalition was a sign that “Europeans will never abandon Ukraine – never.”

## **Glastonbury 2025, by the numbers, from the cows to toilets to pints to, yes, the music**



By LOUISE DIXON Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — This week, thousands of music lovers from across the U.K. and beyond will flock to a farm in the southwest of England for the legendary Glastonbury Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts. But just how many?

Find out in this guide to Glastonbury — and all of its quirks — by the numbers.

### **210,000: Full capacity of the festival**

The festival's current license allows up to 210,000 people on-site, including fans, staff and performers — but, this year, a few thousand fewer tickets have been sold, to avoid overcrowding.

The closest village of Pilton has a population of around 1,000 people. During the festival, though, the area becomes the seventh-largest largest city in the U.K. (more than double that of nearby Bath, which has a population of around 94,000).

### **1,200,000: Pints of beer stocked across more than 100 bars**

Brooklyn Brewery's pilsner has been the official beer of Glastonbury since 2023, keeping festivalgoers well lubricated. This year, they are preparing more than 1.2 million pints of lager for a hot and thirsty crowd. That's equivalent to two standard-size swimming pools.

And that's despite Glastonbury's B.Y.O. standing, unique at British music festivals where bringing alcohol in from the outside is usually prohibited. At Glastonbury, if you can carry it, you can drink it, and it's not uncommon to see wheelbarrows and small trailers being pulled into campsites with a weekend's worth of supplies of food and drink.

### **120,000: Largest-ever crowd for one set**

The headliners on the iconic Pyramid Stage traditionally attract the biggest crowds, and Elton John's 2023 farewell gig attracted more than 120,000 fans as he closed the festival. Paul McCartney pulled in more than 100,000 festivalgoers for his headlining Saturday night set in 2022.

### **4,000: Number of toilets**

As well as standard portable toilets, the more than 4,000 toilets include the infamous “long drops” — lockable, open-air toilets set up on high with a huge concrete gutter around 10 feet (3 meters) below (looking down not recommended) and “compost loos,” with a bin of sawdust located outside to scoop and scatter over your business. There are also both men's and women's urinals for a speedy pee!

By contrast, there are scarce few public showers. Organizers instead recommend a “good ol’ fashioned stripwash and making do.”

### **3,972: Performers across 120 stages this year**

This year's headliners are English indie rockers The 1975 on Friday, Canadian-American singer-songwriter Neil Young on Saturday and American pop star Olivia Rodrigo closing on Sunday. But if that's not your thing, there are 3,969 other acts to choose from.

### **35: Minutes it took for 2025 tickets to sell out**

Tickets for this year went on sale in November 2024, more than 6 months before a single performer was announced, yet the general admission tickets sold out in 35 minutes. The resale round in April saw remaining tickets sell out in just 20 minutes.

### **1970: Glastonbury's birth year**

This does not mean this week is the 55th edition though, as traditionally the festival takes a fallow year roughly every five years to allow the farmland to recover. The last official fallow year was 2018, but the festival's 50th anniversary in 2020 and the following year's edition were canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

If you're considering making Glasto plans for next year, don't bother: 2026 is a fallow year.

### **1,000: Acres constituting the festival's site**

This is equivalent to 500 soccer pitches or approximately 733 standard American football fields. That makes it the world's largest greenfield music and arts event.

### **1,000: Cows living on the farmland**

The rest of the year, that is — the humans and the cows don't cohabitate during the festival. Worthy Farm, where the festival is held, is a working farm with 500 milking cows and 500 young stock. During the festival, organizer Michael Eavis sends the dairy cows for a short stay at the Glastonbury “Moo-tel,” a large shed based away from the action, while the rest go off to graze further afield.

### **400: Food stalls**

The more than 400 stalls go well beyond the traditional festival burger, offering just about every type of global cuisine you can imagine. Plus the Brits love a “meal deal” (a combo of a main meal and a drink or side dish) and Glastonbury is no exception with 6-pound (roughly \$8) meal deals offered across the site to keep things affordable.

### **30: Arrests made in 2024**

Twenty-one of these were for drug-related offenses, but the festival retains a low crime rate overall.

### **8: Kilometers around the perimeter fence**

A “Super Fortress Fence” was installed in 2002. Before this, there were tens of thousands of gate-crashers every year. Some jumped the fence, while others tunneled under, “Great Escape” style. Eavis installed the impenetrable fence after he was fined in 2000 for breaching licensing conditions.

### **5: Days the festival site is open for business**

Ticket holders can get access starting 8 a.m. Wednesday to pitch their tents and bag the best spots. While there is entertainment and music over the first few days, the main stages start up on Friday morning and run through Sunday night. All festivalgoers must leave by 5 p.m. Monday, when the site officially closes.

### 5: Most headlining appearances of any band

Coldplay has headlined the Pyramid Stage a record five times. They first topped the bill in 2002, followed by 2005, 2011, 2016 and, most recently, 2024. Arctic Monkeys, Muse and Radiohead are among an elite group of artists who have headlined three times.

### 3: Banned items that may surprise you

Among the list of banned items you might expect, including narcotics, weapons and fireworks, are the less assuming Chinese lanterns, body glitter and gazebos. The first two are verboten because of environmental concerns — a couple cows have died from ingesting the remnants of a Chinese lantern! — while a sudden rash of gazebos would take up too much space in the busy campsites.

### 0: Number of plastic bottles sold on-site

Glastonbury banned single-use plastic in 2019, installing more drinking water fountains around the site and encouraging festivalgoers to bring reusable bottles — for water or some other liquid of choice, of course.

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