

■ CORONATION

## King Charles's coronation: your complete hour-by-hour guide to the plans

A day for Britain to remember, from the Palace to Westminster Abbey and the procession back



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**I**n just a few days' time King Charles III will be crowned at Westminster Abbey. Like every coronation that has ever been held, it will be rich in tradition and history, with rituals that go back hundreds of years. But in the same way, it will also be different from every coronation that has gone before: each sovereign has their own style and their own beliefs, and no two coronations have ever been exactly the same.

The exact detail of what will happen on May 6 is yet to be announced by Buckingham Palace. But overarching structure of the ceremony will remain broadly the same. This, to the best of our knowledge, is how events will unfold.

• [King Charles's coronation weekend: bank holiday date and plans](#)



### Saturday, May 6, King's Procession

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A fly-over of the King's coronation route

King Charles and Queen Camilla will travel from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey in the Diamond Jubilee State Coach, which was first used in 2014. The King's Procession is the smaller of the day's two processions, consisting of just under 200 military personnel, centred around the Sovereign's Escort of the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment.

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Diamond Jubilee State Coach



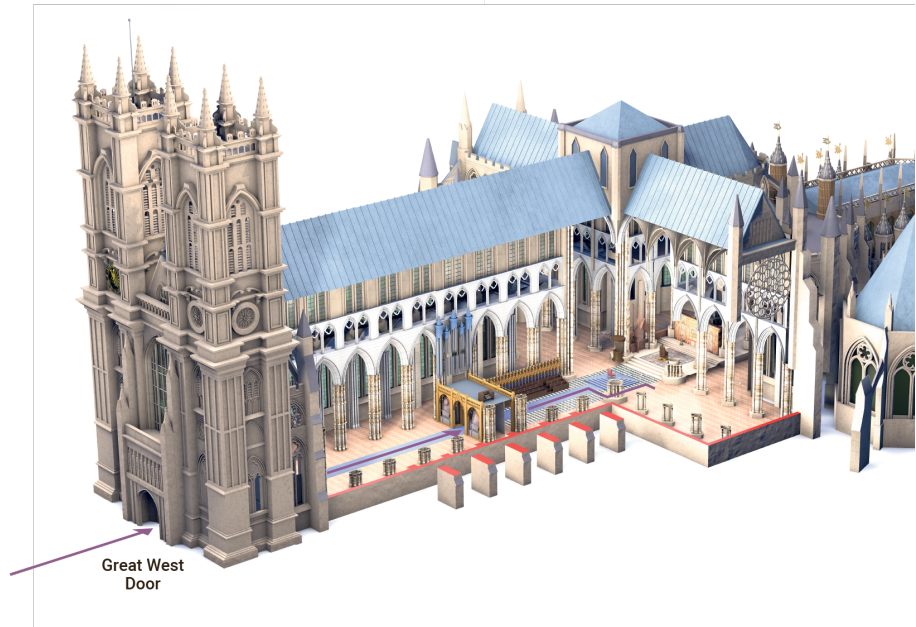
After arriving at the abbey's Great West Door, the King will make his way up the nave in a long procession, flanked by the Bishops of Bath and Wells and Durham. Two Maces will be carried before him, traditional emblems of authority, along with the Sword of State, symbolising royal authority. Also carried will be three swords — the Sword of Temporal Justice, signifying the King's role as head of the armed forces, the Sword of Spiritual Justice, signifying his role as Defender of the Faith,

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### Westminster Abbey



Traditionally, the sovereign is wearing the Robe of State, which is also known as the Parliament Robe from its role in the state opening of parliament. The late Queen's Robe of State, made of crimson velvet trimmed with ermine and gold lace, was made for her by Ede and Ravenscroft. There has been speculation that the King will have a new one made for his coronation. While Edward VII, George V and George VI all wore the velvet and ermine Cap of State to their respective coronation ceremonies, it is thought that the King might choose not to wear this particular garment. It has also been suggested that he will wear military uniform rather the tunic and breeches worn by his predecessors.



### The Recognition

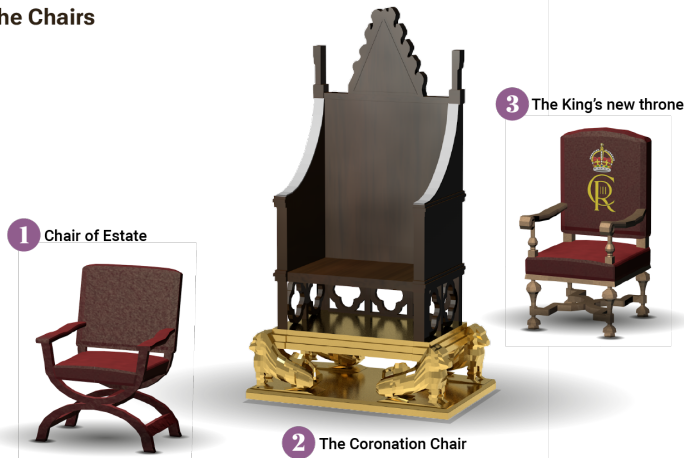
At the end of the procession the Recognition is the symbolic chance for the congregation to identify the person presented to them for anointing and crowning. The Archbishop of Canterbury is expected to present the King to the east, south, west and north sides of the abbey, saying: "Sirs, I present unto you King Charles, your undoubted King. Wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage and service, are you willing to do the same?" It will presumably be answered with a shout of "God Save King Charles" and a fanfare of trumpets.

## The Oath

The King sits first of all in the Chair of Estate, to the south of the High Altar, for the administration of the Coronation Oath by the archbishop. The King will swear to govern each of his countries according to their respective laws and customs, to mete out law and justice with mercy, to maintain the Protestant Reformed Religion and maintain and preserve the Church of England. Afterwards the King is presented with the Bible by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

- [Pope gives King fragments from Christ's cross for coronation](#)

## The Chairs



## The Anointing

For the anointing the King moves to the Coronation Chair, also known as St Edward's (or King Edward's) Chair. Commissioned by Edward I to enclose the Stone of Scone, which he brought to the abbey in 1296, it has been the centrepiece of coronations for more than 700 years. As the King sits in the chair (which faces the High Altar, not the congregation) the archbishop anoints him with holy oil. Exactly how this will happen is not clear yet: when the late Queen Elizabeth was anointed, protected by a



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For the anointing Queen Elizabeth wore a plain white dress over her coronation gown. The anointing, in which the archbishop pours the oil from an ampulla on the shape of an eagle into the 12th century Coronation Spoon before using it to anoint the sovereign on the head, hands and chest, is the most religiously symbolic part of the coronation ceremony.



A canopy was placed over the young Queen Elizabeth II for the anointing at her coronation in June 1953, the most religiously symbolic part of the ceremony  
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It can trace its origins back to the Old Testament, when the Prophet Samuel anointed Saul to be the first king of the Israelites, and emphasises the spiritual status of the sovereign: until the seventeenth century the sovereign was considered to be appointed directly by God, which was confirmed by the ceremony of anointing. William the Conqueror introduced the custom from France in 1066, when he was the first King of England to be anointed with sacred oil.

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tunic", a simple white linen shift which represents purity and simplicity before God. Over that is placed the supertunica, an ornate full-length sleeved coat of gold silk. Both George VI and Elizabeth II used the supertunica made for George V in 1911. Queen Elizabeth II was also invested with the Stole Royal and the Robe Royal.

### Spurs

Like many of the regalia, the Spurs were made in 1661 for Charles II after the previous regalia were melted down under Oliver Cromwell. Made of gold, leather and velvet, the Spurs symbolise knighthood. Until the coronation of Charles I, they were actually fastened on the heels of the monarch. Since then they have been simply held to the ankles of kings or presented to queens regnant.

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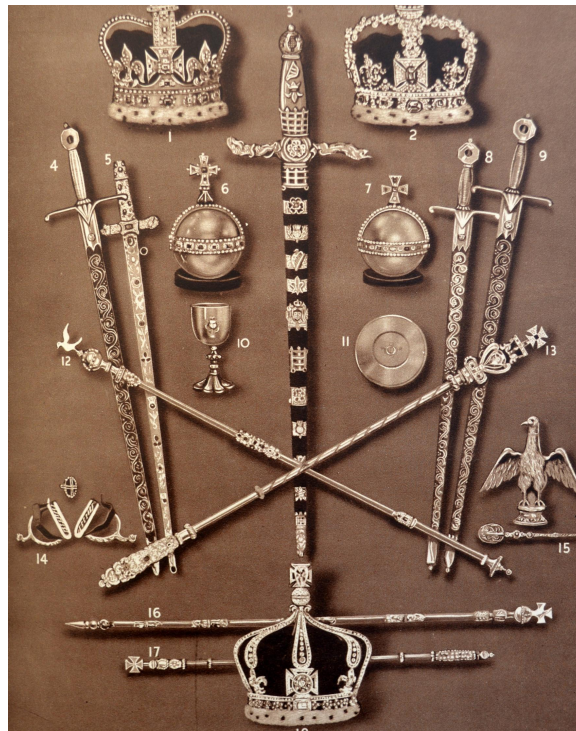
### Sword of Offering

Made for the coronation of George IV in 1821, the sword has a steel blade mounted in gold and set with jewels. After blessing the sword the archbishop delivers it to the King with the injunction that it should be used for the protection of good and the punishment of evil. Afterwards the sovereign offers the Sword of Offering to Westminster Abbey, as "payment" for them hosting the Coronation. Because it is so valuable, it is given back to the monarch but exchanged for what used to be 100 shillings.

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Ceremonial crowns and other regalia from the George VI's coronation in 1937. 1 St Edward's Crown; 2 the Imperial State Crown; 3 the Sword of State; 4, 8, 9 Three ceremonial swords; 5 Jewelled Sword of the Offering; 6 Sovereign's Orb; 7 Queen Consort's Orb; 10 Chalice; 11 Paten; 12 Queen's Sceptre with Dove; 13 Royal Sceptre; 14 Royal spurs and Sovereign's Ring; 15 Ampulla and Spoon; 16 St Edward's Staff; 17 Queen's Sceptre with the Cross; 18 Queen Mary's Crown

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### Armills

Made for Charles II to replace a previous pair, the armills are bracelets made from gold decorated with enamel and lined in velvet. Their original purpose is unclear, but they are thought to relate to ancient symbols of knighthood and military leadership. They have been referred to during previous coronations as the "bracelets of sincerity and wisdom". New versions were made for Queen Elizabeth II.

### Orb

A representation of the sovereign's power and symbolising the Christian world, the Sovereign's Orb was made from gold in the seventeenth century, and is divided into three sections with bands of jewels, for each of the three continents known in medieval period. It is placed in the monarch's right hand as they are invested with the symbols of sovereignty, and later placed on the altar before the moment of crowning.

### Sovereign's Ring



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ring, made in 1831 and featuring a sapphire overlaid with rubies in the shape of a cross. The ring, which symbolises “kingly dignity”, is placed by the archbishop on the fourth finger of the sovereign’s right hand.

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### Sceptre with Cross

Made of gold and set with rubies, emeralds, sapphire and diamonds, the sceptre holds Cullinan I, or the Great Star of Africa, the largest clear cut diamond in the world. The sceptre represents the sovereign’s temporal power and is associated with good governance.

### Sceptre with Dove

This sceptre represents the sovereign’s spiritual role, with the dove symbolising the Holy Ghost. Traditionally it has been known as “the Rod of Equity and Mercy”.



## The Crowning

For the crowning the King is invested with Robe Royal (Pallium Regale), also known as the Imperial Mantle, which was first used for George IV in 1821.



Seated on the Coronation Chair and clasping the two sceptres, the King is crowned with St Edward's Crown, which was made for Charles II as a replacement for the mediaeval crown. It is made of a solid gold frame set with rubies, amethysts, sapphires, garnet, topazes and tourmalines, and is topped with an orb and a cross, representing the Christian world. It is very heavy, and after William III monarchs chose to be crowned with a lighter, bespoke crown. Edward VII intended to revive the tradition of using St Edward's Crown, but he was too ill to

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from 2.6 kg to 2.2 kg. It is easy to put on back to front: to avoid any mishaps with Queen Elizabeth II's coronation the front was marked with a small gold star.

After the crowning the King and Queen will receive Holy Communion.



### The Enthronement

The King is then escorted to the throne and symbolically “lifted” into it, thus taking possession of his kingdom. In a prayer which has been part of the coronation since the early Middle Ages, the archbishop exhorts him to “stand firm and hold fast”. Traditionally a new throne is made for each coronation.



### Homage

While still seated on the throne the monarch receives the homage. The archbishop and senior clergy are the first to kneel in homage to the crowned and anointed sovereign, followed traditionally by the royal dukes and representatives of the peerage. There has been speculation that the homage could be modified or even dropped from the ceremony. In 1953 as leader of the opposition Clement Attlee attempted to introduce homage by the Speaker as representative of the common man.



### Final Procession

For the closing procession, after retiring to St Edward's Chapel the monarch has traditionally changed into purple velvet robes, known as the Robe of Estate (not to be confused with the Robe of State worn at the beginning of the ceremony). It is not yet known whether the King will have a new Robe of Estate or use that of his grandfather George VI. He will also have swapped St Edward's Crown for the lighter Imperial State Crown.



### Queen Camilla

The Queen will be anointed and crowned in the same way, although she will not use the Coronation Chair. She will have her own throne.

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### Coronation Procession

The King and Queen return to Buckingham Palace in the Coronation Procession, which will consist of nearly 4,000

members of the armed forces

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It will retrace the same route as the earlier King's Procession — around Parliament Square, up Whitehall, past Trafalgar Square, through Admiralty Arch and along The Mall. The couple will receive a salute in the palace garden before making an appearance with other members of the royal family on the balcony.



The royal family and the coronation party gathered on the balcony at Buckingham Palace on June 2, 1953. King Charles and Queen Camilla will repeat the scene after the morning of ceremony at Westminster Abbey

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### Flypast

A flypast of around 60 aircraft will delight crowds in central London in a six-minute display and will include the Red Arrows and historic Spitfires from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. A separate 16-aircraft helicopter formation will also pass through the skies north of the capital.

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