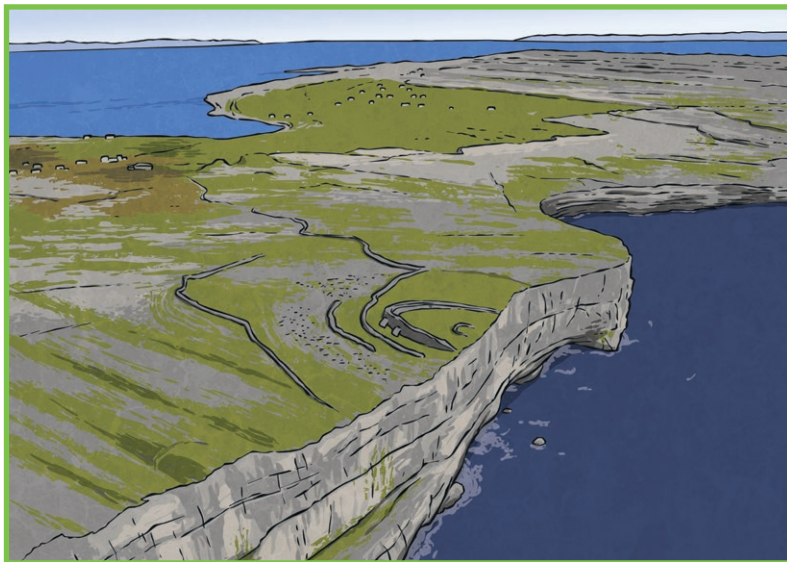


# Dún Aengus

Dún Aengus is a prehistoric fort, built on Inishmore. Inishmore is the largest of the Aran Islands off the coast of County Galway.

Archaeologists have dated Dún Aengus back to 1100 BC, the time of the Bronze Age. The fort is located on the edge of a 300 foot cliff, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Legend has it that the Fir Bolgs, a mythical race, built the Fort on Inishmore after they were exiled from Ireland by the Tuatha dé Danann. Their chieftain was named Aengus so they named the fort after him. Dún Aengus means the 'fort of Aengus'.

The fort has three outer walls surrounding it. It also has a special defensive wall known as a 'chevaux de frise'. This is a row of tall, jagged rocks sticking out from the ground. The idea of the chevaux de frise was to slow attackers down as they approached the fort, and to make it impossible to reach the fort on horseback.



Archaeologists excavated the site during the 1990s on four separate digs. They found many artefacts during these digs. An artefact is a man-made item. Bronze rings, pottery shards and spear heads were all found at Dún Aengus. These artefacts are on display in the National Museum in Dublin.

Today, Dún Aengus is a popular tourist destination. People take the ferry to Inishmore and cycle to the fort. There is a visitor centre attached to the site. Visitors can walk around the fort, and stand on the edge of the cliffs peering down into the Atlantic Ocean.

# Questions

1. Which island is Dún Aengus located on?

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2. Where are the Aran Islands? Use your atlas to find out the name of the other two islands.

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3. When was Dún Aengus built?

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4. How did Dún Aengus get its name?

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5. Describe the layout of Dún Aengus.

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6. What is a 'chevaux de frise'?

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7. What is an artefact?

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8. What artefacts did archaeologists find at Dún Aengus?

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9. How can visitors reach Dún Aengus today?

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# Answers

1. Which island is Dún Aengus located on?  
**Dún Aengus is located on Inishmore.**
2. Where are the Aran Islands? Use your atlas to find out the name of the other two islands.  
**The Aran Islands are off the coast of Galway. The other two islands are named Inisheer and Inishmaan.**
3. When was Dún Aengus built?  
**Dún Aengus was built in 1100 BC.**
4. How did Dún Aengus get its name?  
**Legend has it that Dún Aengus was built by the Fir Bolgs. Their chieftain was called Aengus.**
5. Describe the layout of Dún Aengus.  
**The fort has three outer stone walls surrounding it.**
6. What is a 'chevaux de frise'?  
**A 'chevaux de frise' is a special defensive wall designed to slow attackers down.**
7. What is an artefact?  
**An artefact is a man-made object.**
8. What artefacts did archaeologists find at Dún Aengus?  
**Archaeologists found bronze rings, pottery shards and spear heads at Dún Aengus.**
9. How can visitors reach Dún Aengus today?  
**Tourists can take a ferry to Inishmore to visit Dún Aengus.**
10. Imagine you lived at Dún Aengus during the Bronze Age.  
Write a diary describing a day in your life.  
**Varied answers.**