

Hyde Park

Website: [www.royalparks.org.uk/parks/hyde-park](http://www.royalparks.org.uk/parks/hyde-park)

**Hyde Park** is a [Grade I-listed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Listed_building#Heritage_protection) major park in [Central London](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_London). It is the largest of four [Royal Parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Parks_of_London) that form a chain from the entrance of [Kensington Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington_Palace) through [Kensington Gardens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington_Gardens) and Hyde Park, via Hyde Park Corner and [Green Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Park) past the main entrance to [Buckingham Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buckingham_Palace). The park is divided by the [Serpentine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serpentine_(lake)) and [the Long Water](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Long_Water) lakes.

The park was established by [Henry VIII](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_VIII_of_England) in 1536 when he took the land from [Westminster Abbey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westminster_Abbey) and used it as a hunting ground. It opened to the public in 1637 and quickly became popular, particularly for May Day parades. Major improvements occurred in the early 18th century under the direction of [Queen Caroline](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caroline_of_Ansbach). Several [duels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duel) took place in Hyde Park during this time, often involving members of the nobility. [The Great Exhibition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Exhibition) of 1851 was held in the park, for which [The Crystal Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Crystal_Palace), designed by [Joseph Paxton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Paxton), was erected.

[Free speech](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_speech) and [demonstrations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demonstration_(protest)) have been a key feature of Hyde Park since the 19th century. [Speakers' Corner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speakers%27_Corner) has been established as a point of free speech and debate since 1872, while the [Chartists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartists), the [Reform League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reform_League), the [suffragettes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suffragettes), and the [Stop the War Coalition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/15_February_2003_anti-war_protest) have all held protests there. In the late 20th century, the park was known for holding large-scale free rock music concerts, featuring groups such as [Pink Floyd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pink_Floyd), [The Rolling Stones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rolling_Stones) and [Queen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_(band)). Major events in the park have continued into the 21st century, such as [Live 8](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Live_8) in 2005, and the annual [Hyde Park Winter Wonderland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyde_Park_Winter_Wonderland) from 2007.

For further information: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyde_Park,_London>