

# Exhibition Galleries



## 1 Prehistoric Ireland

This exhibition traces the archeological riches of the Prehistoric period in Ireland - the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages. The exhibition illustrates the life of the hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age, c.7000-3700BC. Life in a farming settlement in the Neolithic, or New Stone Age c.3700-2500BC, featuring objects such as a saddle quern, which was used to grind corn, pins made from animal bones, pottery and shells. Passage tombs, such as Newgrange, are of a Neolithic date, and the exhibition features a reconstruction of a typical tomb. Ceremonial events and symbolism are also illustrated through ritual objects. The Bronze Age, c.2400-500BC was a time of great change and innovation because of the introduction of metalworking. The exhibition concludes with a reconstructed Iron Age burial from a bog in Co. Galway, thought to be a ritual sacrifice.



## 2 Ór - Ireland's Gold

This exhibition focuses on the National Museum's collection of Bronze Age gold objects, one of the greatest museum collections in Europe. Many of the objects on display were found in hoards, and were discovered during farming or turf cutting. Because many hoards were found in bogs it appears that the people of the Bronze Age regarded them as special places. A section of the exhibition explains the geological background of the gold used to produce the objects on display.



## 3 The Treasury

This exhibition traces the development of Irish art from the arrival of Celtic peoples to Ireland in the last centuries of the Prehistoric era to the beginning of the Medieval period c.1200AD. The arrival of the Celts to Ireland coincided with knowledge of iron working, and the first section of the exhibition shows the skill of the Celtic metalworkers. This section has the important hoard of gold objects from Broughtor, Co. Derry, which includes a miniature gold boat. The second section illustrates the art of the Early Middle Ages, the Golden Age of Irish Art. Masterpieces on display include the Ardagh Chalice, the Tara Brooch, and the Clonmacnoise Crozier.

At the end of the main gallery there is a special exhibition dedicated to the discovery and conservation of the Faddan More Psalter.



## 4 Kingship & Sacrifice

Following a discovery of two Iron Age bog bodies at Oldcroghan, Co. Offaly and Clonycavan, Co. Meath in 2003, a team of international specialists worked to examine these human remains. This exhibition gives an overview of the results of their analysis and, along with other bog bodies from the National Museum of Ireland collections, offers the public an opportunity to come 'face to face' with their ancient ancestors.



## 4a Ceramics & Glass from Ancient Cyprus

This temporary exhibition focuses on Cypriot artefacts in the collection of the National Museum of Ireland, many of which have never been exhibited before.

The artefacts range in date from the Bronze Age, approximately 2500BC, to the late Roman period, about 300AD, and are arranged chronologically. The exhibition also includes five clay figurines on loan from The Cyprus Museum, Nicosia. The variety of styles and decoration visible in the artefacts from each period illustrates the unique blend of cultural influences that characterises the archaeology of Cyprus.



## 5 Viking Ireland

This exhibition documents the Viking Age in Ireland from the first recorded Viking raid in 795AD to 1170AD.

The 1st section illustrates the Viking invasions with weapons and other objects found in the Viking graves at Islandbridge and Kilmainham, Dublin. The 2nd section highlights rural activities including farming, fishing, spinning and grinding corn. The 3rd section features scale models of Viking Dublin and a typical house of the period. Trades practiced in Dublin included carpentry, blacksmithing, comb making and leatherworking.

## 6 Medieval Ireland

This exhibition deals with life in Ireland from the English or Anglo-Norman invasion of the mid 12th century to the Reformation in the mid 16th century.

**Power: Kings, Lords and Warriors**, deals with the English colonisation of Ireland. Life in castle and manor is illustrated through a variety of objects.

**Work: Merchants, Farmers & Artisans**, focuses on daily life in town and country. Tools and products of a range of craftsmen in the town are displayed beside farming tools and products of the country.



**Prayer: Bishops, Pilgrims & Parishioners**, contains all of the principal reliquaries and pieces of art from the Late Middle Ages, including the Cathach of St. Columba, the Shrine of St. Brigid's Shoe and carved wooden statues from Fethard, Co. Tipperary.



## 7 Ancient Egypt

This exhibition introduces visitors to the complex civilisation of Egypt from the Predynastic period, c.5000BC to the Roman period c.395AD. The display presents artefacts that portray life, death and religious practices in Ancient Egypt.

This exhibition features four mummies, three of which are encased in elaborately painted mummy cases. Jewellery, cosmetics and related articles reflect the Ancient Egyptians' love of personal adornment.

## 8 Clontarf 1014

Clontarf is probably the best-known battle in Irish history, but also one of the least understood. Popular perception sees the battle as the great victory where the Christian king of Ireland, Brian Boru, defeated the pagan Vikings and drove them out of Ireland. But is this correct? This temporary exhibition explodes myths and present the evidence we have for what actually happened at Clontarf, what led up to the battle and what resulted from it. Viking and Irish weapons, typical of those used in the battle, will feature alongside hoards of precious silver objects and religious treasures. Much more recent artefacts will bring the story of Brian Boru and Clontarf right into modern times.

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## Temporary Exhibition

For information on current and forthcoming temporary exhibitions, please contact reception.



## 10 The Ceramics Room

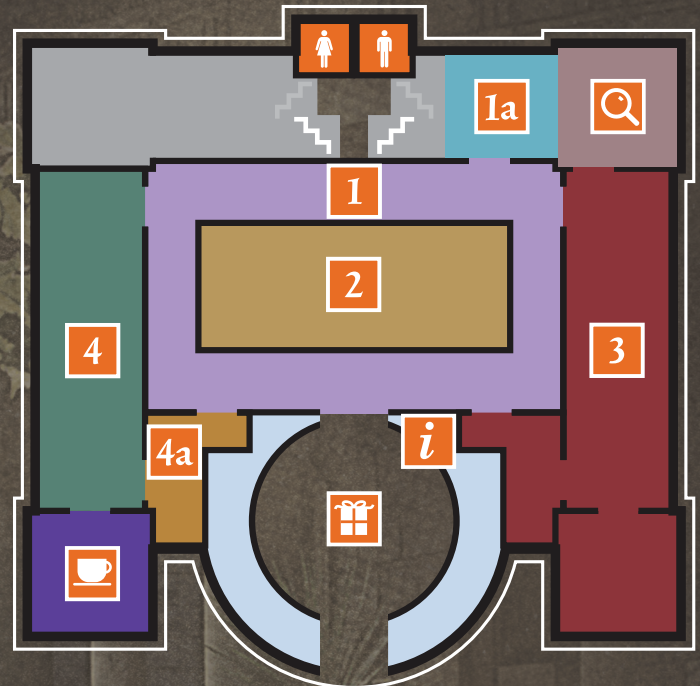




# Museum Floorplan

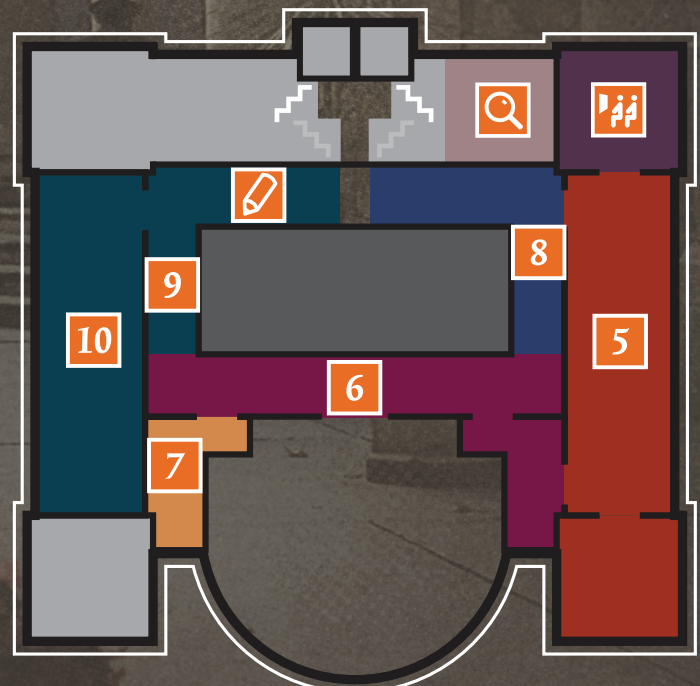
## Ground Floor

-  Museum Shop
-  Museum Café
-  Toilets
-  Administration
-  Reception
-  Pre-Historic Ireland
-  Temporary Exhibition
-  Kildare Room
-  Ór - Ireland's Gold
-  The Treasury
-  Kingship & Sacrifice
-  Temporary Exhibition



## First Floor

-  Administration
-  Audio Visual Room
-  Activity Cart
-  Learning Resource Room
-  Viking Ireland
-  Medieval Ireland
-  Ancient Egypt
-  Temporary Exhibition
-  Temporary Exhibition
-  The Ceramics Room/  
Temporary Exhibition



Note Plans not to scale.

### Free admission

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Christmas Day & Good Friday

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