

Valhalloween!

Horrible Helmets – Information

Did you know?

The Vikings never had horns on their helmets! In fact, there has been very little archaeological evidence for Vikings wearing helmets at all! Only one complete helmet has ever been found and that was found at Gjermundbu in Norway. This dates to the 10th century and so it is around 1000 years old.

This helmet is made from iron. It is in the shape of a rounded or peaked cap made from four plates of iron. These were riveted together with a strip of metal. This is called the *spangenhelm* technique. On the front it has a nose and eye guard which would have protected the wearer. This helmet also has evidence of a sword blow and an arrow puncture, which tells archaeologists that it was worn in a battle. Only two other partial helmets have ever been found at Municipality in Denmark and Gotland in Sweden.



During the Viking Age iron was difficult to make, and it was even harder to make it into the shape of a helmet. That meant that helmets were expensive and so were not widely used.



However, rune stones and other illustrations suggest that Vikings wore simpler helmets, possibly made out of hard leather.

Helmets were just one part of a Viking warrior's armour when going into battle. Many Vikings would have used shields to protect themselves and swords and axes when fighting. They also would have used spears. The Vikings would have used these in Ireland when they came, and many of them can be seen on display in the *Viking Ireland* Exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology.