

SHIPS: A Timeline

Ships and boats are the oldest types of transport. The first ships were built thousands of years ago. Ships and boats are used for travel, by the armed forces for our defense, for fishing, for transporting cargo between countries, and for leisure, sport and relaxation.

Three quarters of all goods carried from country to country must cross oceans and seas in ships and boats. This **timeline** shows some major developments in the building of ships and boats.



Many thousands of years ago, a raft made by tying several logs together with creepers, was the first kind water transport that a person could steer. In this photo you can see that rafts are still used today, to carry people and goods across rivers and lakes.

Later, people made the first real boats by hollowing out logs, rather like the one in this photo.

A frame boat, built like a basket and covered with animal skins was another very early boat. A coating of tar kept the boat watertight.

4000 BC: Boat builders in ancient Egypt used reeds to build what were probably the first sailing boats. The Egyptian reed boats had a mast and sails and were used on the river Nile.

By **2500 BC** the Egyptians were building wooden boats that could sail across oceans.

1550 BC to 300 BC

The Phoenicians (people from the ancient civilisation of Canaan (what is now Lebanon and Syria) and ancient Greeks used the galley, a man-powered sailing vessel, to travel and trade and fighting with their neighbours.



1000 AD



Viking longboats

These ships had sails as well as up to 60 oarsmen who rowed the ship. The longboats were long and narrow so were able to travel on the open sea, as well as along rivers.

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1100 AD

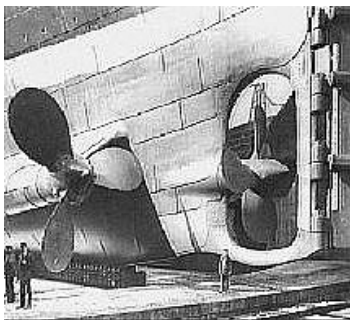
Chinese junks were sailing boats with a rudder for steering the boat, battens on the sails to give them greater strength, and watertight compartments long before western ships had them. They were fighting and transport ships.





1450 onwards: **Three and four masted sailing ships** were in service for several centuries. These wooden ships were used as battleships, and by explorers and as trade vessels, carrying cargo from country to country.

In the 1800s, fast sailing ships called '**clipper ships**' were built. They had long, slim hulls and tall masts.



1819 The first **steamships** to cross the Atlantic combined steam and wind power.

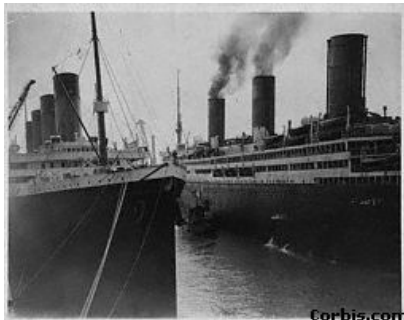
1845 The first **ocean-going liners made of iron** and driven by a propeller were being built from this time.



1880s

Some **steam driven river boats** had rear paddles and were called stern wheelers, others had paddle wheels on either side.

1910



Coal burning sailing ships were converted to **diesel power**, using oil instead of steam.



1955

Hovercraft float above the waves on cushions of air and are capable of high speeds of up to 140 km an hour.



1959 The N.S. Savannah, one of the first **nuclear powered cargo ships**, was able to sail for three and a half years without refuelling.



1980s Hydrofoil

Used as ferries or water taxis, hydrofoils ride on wings that lift the craft clear of the water so that it rides on skis as it gains speed.



Container ships carry cargo in huge metal boxes which are stacked on the deck. A modern cargo ship can carry up to one thousand containers. All containers are the same size and they are unloaded at ports which are equipped with special cranes. That containers are loaded onto trucks to be taken from the port.



Among the largest ships ever built, these **supertankers** are used to transport oil.



1990s

Cruise liners are ships that carry hundreds of people on floating holidays. Passengers live on the ship, which has restaurants, shops, cinemas and other recreation venues.



Modern **nuclear powered aircraft carriers**, battle cruisers, destroyers, and **nuclear powered submarines** are all used to keep a country safe and to protect its territory.

