



Photo: Diliff · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons

FREE GUIDE · LONDON

British Museum

Rosetta Stone, Parthenon Marbles, Assyrian winged bulls, mummies, Sutton Hoo... — the 7 must-see treasures of the British Museum, explained one by one



Tickets Visit

tickets and guides to monuments

Your visit at a glance

The British Museum is enormous, it's free and it holds the entire history of humankind under one roof: the Rosetta Stone, the Parthenon Marbles, winged bulls that guarded Assyrian palaces 2,700 years ago. And precisely because it's free and overwhelming, the most common mistake is trying to see it all and walking out exhausted without having enjoyed a thing. The trick is to go straight for the essentials. This guide brings together the museum's seven must-see treasures —the ones you really can't miss—, with the context to understand why they matter and 1, 2 and 3-hour routes so you can choose according to the time you have.

At a glance

PRICE

Free · donation ~£5

FREE ENTRY

Always · permanent collection

HOURS

Every day 10am-5pm · Fri 10am-8:30pm

TIME

2-3 h for the 7 treasures

PIECES HERE

The 7 must-sees

UNDERGROUND

Tottenham Court Road



Part of Tickets Visit

tickets-visit.com is part of Tickets Visit, the network of tickets and guides to monuments.

With this free guide you already do a great visit: the essentials, with a route. If you want to make the most of it, at the end I'll show you the complete version.

Before you go in: book your skip-the-line ticket

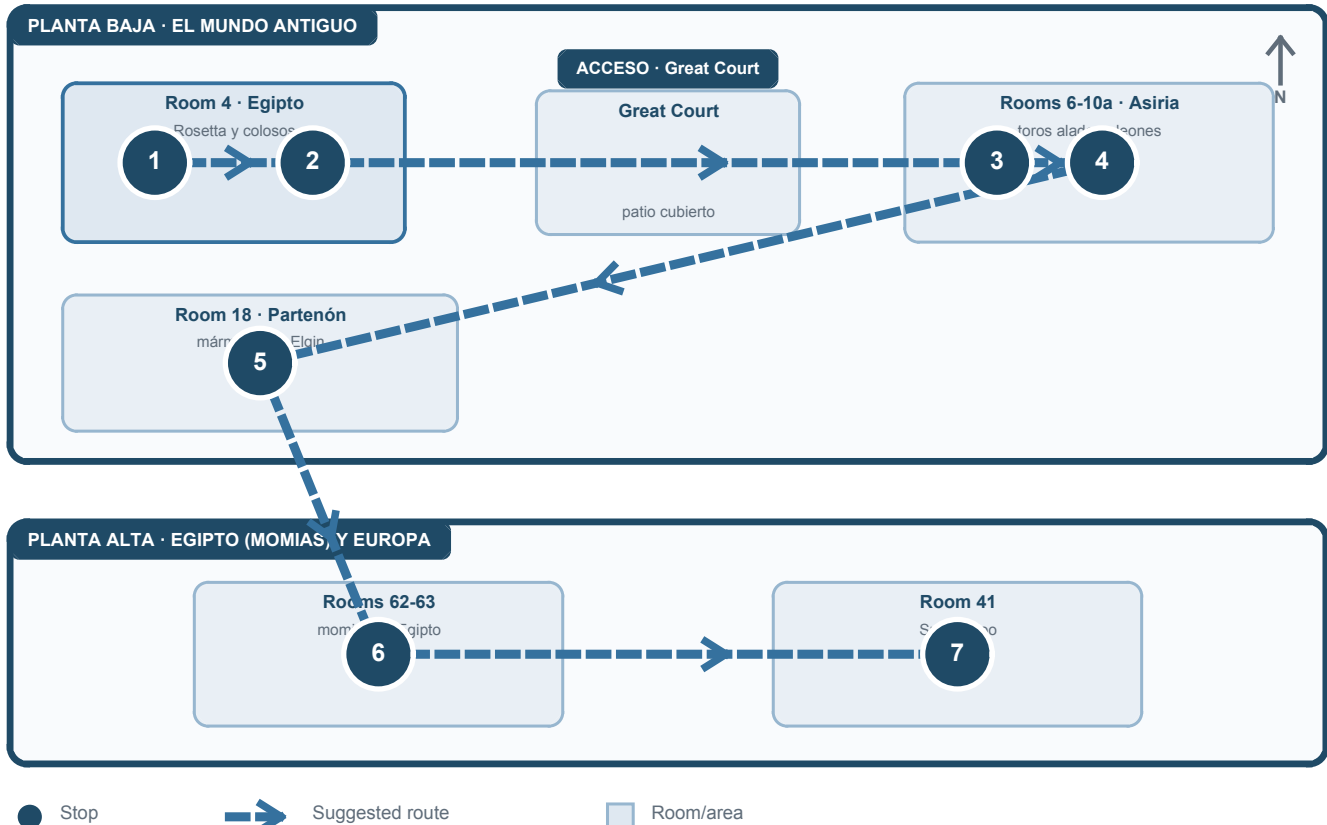
On Civitatis, with free cancellation. Skip the ticket-office queue.

» **Buy your ticket**

The map and the route

Come in through the Great Court, the great covered courtyard, and organise your visit floor by floor to avoid going up and down more than you need to. On the GROUND FLOOR the ancient civilisations are gathered: start in Room 4 with the Rosetta Stone and the Egyptian colossi, move on to the Assyrian rooms (6-10) for the winged bulls and Ashurbanipal's lion hunt, and finish in Room 18 with the Parthenon Marbles. Then head up to the FIRST FLOOR for the mummies (Rooms 62-64) and the Sutton Hoo treasure (Room 41). Back in the Great Court, save the Easter Island moai for last. Follow the numbers on the stops: they run in the most comfortable order for making your way around the museum.

MUSEO BRITÁNICO · ALAS EN TORNO AL GREAT COURT (ESQUEMA, NO A ESCALA)



Casi todo lo esencial está en la planta baja, alrededor del Great Court; las momias y el tesoro de Sutton Hoo, en la planta alta. Distribución orientativa por sala; no es el plano oficial ni está a escala.

Visiting order: GROUND FLOOR: 1 Rosetta Stone › 2 Egyptian colossi › 3 Assyrian winged bulls › 4 Ashurbanipal's lion hunt › 5 Parthenon Marbles — UP TO THE FIRST FLOOR — 6 Mummies (Rooms 62-64) › 7 Sutton Hoo treasure — BACK TO THE GREAT COURT — Extra: the Hoa Hakananai'a moai and Norman Foster's Great Court

Schematic layout by area; the number shows the visiting order. Not to scale: follow the museum's own floor plans and signs on the day.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

1

The Rosetta Stone

Room 4 (Egyptian sculpture) · 15

A block of stone with the same decree carved in hieroglyphs, demotic and Greek. Being able to read the Greek, Champollion deciphered the hieroglyphs in 1822 and gave a voice back to the whole of Ancient Egypt. It's the museum's most consulted and photographed object.



The Rosetta Stone, the key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Photo: Hans Hillewaert · CC BY-SA 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons



THE THREE BANDS

Notice the three different bands of writing and how the signs change from top to bottom.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

This stone has 'travelled' more than you'd imagine: there was a moment in the 20th century when they had to hide it underground in a hurry. Where and why, in the full guide.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

3

The Assyrian winged bulls

Rooms 6-10 (Assyria) · 15

Enormous winged bulls and lions with human heads, the lamassu, that guarded the gates of the Assyrian palaces in present-day Iraq. They have five legs so they look still from the front and walking from the side. They are almost unique witnesses after the destruction of many originals in Iraq in 2015.



An Assyrian lamassu, a winged bull with a human head, guardian of palaces.

Photo: Steve F-E-Cameron · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons



COUNT ITS LEGS

Count the lamassu's legs: you'll see five, a trick so it looks still from the front and walking from the side.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

These guardians didn't always look the way they do today: 2,700 years ago they looked very different, and in the full guide we tell you how (and why barely a trace of it remains).

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

5

The Parthenon Marbles (Elgin Marbles)

Room 18 (Greece: Parthenon) · 25

Friezes and pediments that decorated the Parthenon of Athens in the 5th century BC, the summit of classical Greek sculpture. They were removed by Lord Elgin in the early 19th century and Greece has been demanding their return for decades. It's the most famous cultural dispute in the world.



The Parthenon Marbles, sculptures from the great temple of the Acropolis of Athens.

Photo: Txllxt TxllxT · CC BY-SA 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons



WALK THE FRIEZE

Walk along the frieze of the procession and notice the horses and how the wet drapery clings to the body.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

The full story of this stop (twice the text), its «ONE FACT» box and all 7 stops of the route, one by one.

THE STOPS, ONE BY ONE

6

The mummies and the Egyptian afterlife

Rooms 62-63 (Egypt: death and the afterlife) · 25

The star gallery of the first floor with human and animal mummies, sarcophagi, gilded masks and canopic jars. It explains the Egyptian obsession with preserving the body for eternal life. The standout is the Gebelein Man, 'Ginger', mummified naturally by the sand around 3500 BC (Room 64, right next door).



Sarcophagi and mummies in the Egyptian afterlife rooms.

Photo: Ibex73 · CC BY-SA 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons



LOOK FOR GINGER

Look for 'Ginger', the natural mummy in a foetal position in the adjoining Room 64, and compare its age with that of the later sarcophagi.

» IN THE PREMIUM GUIDE

The full story of this stop (twice the text), its «ONE FACT» box and all 7 stops of the route, one by one.

Practical tips

Best times

Arrive at opening (10:00) or come in mid-afternoon; the Rosetta and the Parthenon Marbles fill up with groups towards midday. On Fridays it opens until 20:30 and the last hours are the quietest for seeing the star pieces almost on your own.

Free entry

Access to the permanent collection is completely free: you don't need a ticket to get in. The museum survives on donations (they suggest around £5) and on the temporary exhibitions, which are paid. If you want to go beyond the labels, what's really worth it is the guided tour in Spanish we link to in this guide: in such an overwhelming museum, a good guide changes everything.

Book your time slot in advance

Even though entry is free, booking your time slot online speeds up the security check considerably, especially in high season and at weekends. The booking is free and saves you part of the entry queue; arrive a few minutes before your time. Check everything on the official website before you go.

With children

Go straight to the mummies (Rooms 62-63), the Assyrian winged bulls and the Sutton Hoo helmet: they're the pieces that hook children the most. Ask at the entrance for the family backpacks or guides and do the visit in two goes with a break in the Great Court.

Accessibility and services

The museum is wheelchair accessible, with lifts to every floor and free loan of chairs; there are adapted toilets, a cloakroom, cafés and several shops. The Great Court, in the centre, is the best spot for a break halfway round.

Combine it

The museum is in Bloomsbury, a stroll from Covent Garden, the Soho district and the bookshops of Charing Cross Road. You can finish the morning here and walk down towards Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery, also free.

Practical info

Address: Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG (Underground: Tottenham Court Road, Holborn or Russell Square). FREE ENTRY to the permanent collection; temporary exhibitions are paid. Usual hours: every day from 10:00 to 17:00, with extended opening on Fridays until 20:30 (only some galleries; no late opening on Good Friday). Closed on 1 January and from 24 to 26 December. Booking a free time slot online is recommended. Always check hours and closures on britishmuseum.org before you go.

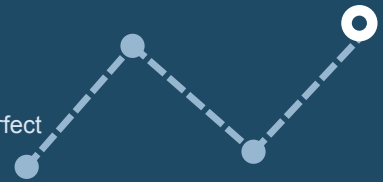
Official website: www.britishmuseum.org

PLAN YOUR TRIP · FREE

The Tickets Visit Planner

Build your day-by-day route, discover what to see nearby and plan the perfect itinerary around the city. Free, no sign-up.

» [Open it at planner.tickets-visit.com](https://planner.tickets-visit.com)



Before you go in: book your skip-the-line ticket

On Civitatis, with free cancellation. Skip the ticket-office queue.

» [Buy your ticket](#)

THE COMPLETE VERSION

Take the complete visit

With this free guide you already cover the essentials. The PREMIUM is your complete visit to British Museum: every work with its story, a 3-step looking guide for every painting, the cheat-sheet for your phone and the tips to skip the queues. For less than the price of a coffee.

In the free guide you miss out on:

- 2 The colossi of pharaonic Egypt**
Room 4 (Egyptian sculpture) · 20
- 4 Ashurbanipal's lion hunt**
Room 10a (Assyrian reliefs) · 15
- 7 The Sutton Hoo treasure**
Room 41 (Europe 300-1100) · 15

PREMIUM Guide · British Museum

€4.99

one-off payment · yours forever

- ✓ All 7 works (the free guide has only 4), each with its story.
- ✓ «What it represents» and «How to look at it» in 3 steps: a looking guide for every painting.
- ✓ The «Route on one page» cheat-sheet for your phone, plus 1-, 2- and 3-hour routes.
- ✓ Contents, keys to understanding it, bios and expanded tips.
- ✓ As a PDF and offline: use it inside the museum without spending data.

Facts checked against official sources · instant download · secure card payment.

Get the complete guide · €4.99

tickets-visit.com/guia-gratis-british-museum ›

RISK-FREE GUARANTEE

If the guide doesn't help on your visit, write to us and we'll refund the €4.99. No questions asked.

For comparison: a guided tour costs €30-60 per person. This guide walks you through with the same detail, everyone travelling with you can use it, and it's yours forever.

Still no ticket? Book skip-the-line

On Civitatis, with free cancellation. Skip the ticket-office queue.

» **Check availability and prices**

A guide produced editorially by Tickets Visit. tickets-visit.com is an independent website and is NOT the official website of British Museum, nor is it affiliated with it. Images are free from Wikimedia Commons (credit under each one). Information is indicative, checked in August 2026; confirm hours and prices on the official website. Bookings handled through Civitatis (affiliate link).