

# HMS Unicorn

## Pre-visit notes for young learners

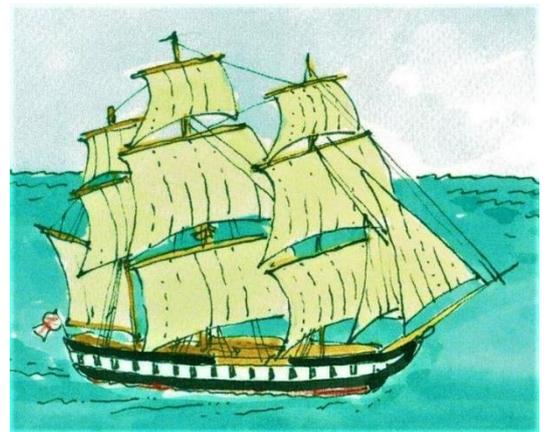


### What is HMS Unicorn?

HMS Unicorn is a historic ship in Dundee, Scotland. At almost 200 years old, HMS Unicorn is the oldest ship in Scotland and one of the oldest ships in the world.

### Who built HMS Unicorn?

HMS Unicorn was built by the Royal Navy at Chatham Royal Dockyard, which is near London, England. She was designed as a 'frigate' – a type of warship – and intended for 46 guns ('cannons') on board as well as 300 men. They started building the ship in 1822 and she was finished in 1824.



### Why call a ship 'Unicorn'?

The ship is named 'Unicorn' after the national animal of Scotland – the mythical unicorn. The first ship to be called 'HMS Unicorn' was built in the 16th century and belonged to the King of Scotland. This ship was captured by the King of England and joined the English Navy, which would become the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom in later years. The name 'HMS Unicorn' continued to be used by the Royal Navy for different ships until the 20th century.

## Why does HMS Unicorn have a roof?

Putting roofs onto ships used to be a very common practice and was done when warships were not needed to be sent out to fight. HMS Unicorn was built during a period of peace and so had a roof put on to protect her. This is why the ship has lasted so long and is still with us today.



## How long has HMS Unicorn been in Dundee?

Although she was built in England, HMS Unicorn has been in Dundee since 1873, making her one of the oldest historic sites in the city. She was brought up to the River Tay to be used as a training ship for the Royal Navy and Royal Naval Reserves (RNR). HMS Unicorn was still being used until the 1960s by the RNR.



## What will I see on HMS Unicorn?

HMS Unicorn has four incredible decks to explore and 200 years of local, social and maritime history to discover. From reading about her construction and history to learning how to fire her huge guns ('cannons'), HMS Unicorn has something for everyone and hundreds of stories to tell. You can even climb onto the lower decks and experience the life of a Georgian sailor!

