

# List of medieval land terms

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Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)

The [feudal system](#), in which the land was owned by a [monarch](#), who in exchange for homage and military service granted its use to [tenants-in-chief](#), who in their turn granted its use to sub-tenants in return for further services, gave rise to several terms, particular to Britain, for subdivisions of land which are no longer in wide use. These **medieval land terms** include the following:

- a [burgage](#), a plot of land rented from a lord or king
- a [hide](#): the hide originally referred to the land-holding that supported a family in the early medieval period, sharing its roots with words used to describe related issues, such as the family deriving directly from the sexual relationship between a man and a woman. The hide was later used to define areas of land, which could vary from 60 to 120 old [acres](#) (approximately 30 modern acres) depending somewhat on the quality of the land. The hide was not ubiquitous in Anglo-Saxon England, with, for example, land in Kent being assessed in *sulungs* (approximately twice the size of the average hide).
- a [Knight's fee](#): is the amount of land for which the services of a [knight](#) (for 40 days) were due to the Crown. It was determined by land value, and the number of hides in a Knight's Fee varied.
- a [hundred](#): a division of an English [shire](#) consisting of 100 *hides*. The hundreds of Stoke Desborough and Burnham in Buckinghamshire are known as the [Chiltern Hundreds](#).
- a [franconian Lan](#) used in [Poland](#) since the 13th century, consisted of 43.2 morgs = 23 to 28 [hectares](#). The term *Lan* was also used to indicate a full-sized farm, as opposed to one split up into a number of smaller sections.
- a [wapentake](#): a subdivision of a [county](#) used in [Yorkshire](#) and other areas of strong [Danish](#) influence. It is similar to *hundred* or a *ward*. It was used in [Yorkshire](#), [Lincolnshire](#), [Nottinghamshire](#), [Derbyshire](#), [Leicestershire](#) and [Rutland](#).
- a [shire](#) was originally a type of a subdivision of a [county](#); some shires evolved into administrative areas equivalent to a county; a shire was headed by a Shire Reeve (becoming [Sheriff](#), in Saskatchewan the Mayor of a Rural Municipality is a Reeve); shires were most commonly subdivided into [hundreds](#), but other types of subdivisions were also made
- a [rape](#): [Sussex](#) was divided into six rapes, which were intermediate divisions between the county and the *hundred*. A rape was to have its own river, forest and [castle](#).
- a [lathe](#): [Kent](#) was divided into five *lathes*, from the Old English *laeth*, meaning district.
- a [riding](#): was a division of land in Yorkshire equivalent to a third of the shire. The name is derived from the [Old Norse](#) *thriding*, meaning "one-third".
- a [ward](#): a ward is a subdivision of a shire, equivalent to a *wapentake* or a *hundred*. It was used in [Northumberland](#), [Cumberland](#), [Westmorland](#), and [Durham](#).