

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture



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Architectural Style

- Followed Romanesque movement
 - Europe in 1100s to end of 16th Century
- Architectural challenge
 - How to make buildings bigger, taller, and support more weight



Westminster Abbey, London,
England

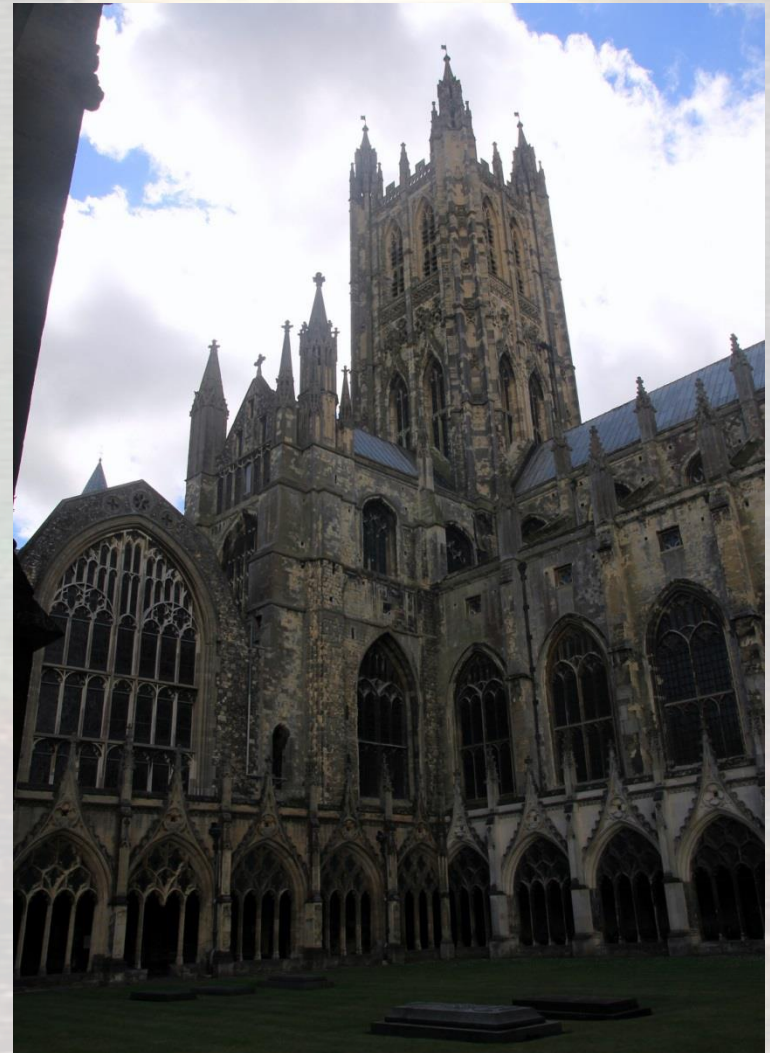
Gothic vs Romanesque

- Gothic buildings designed to be more heavenly
 - Large open spaces, difference in vaulting and arches
- Less gloomy than Romanesque buildings
 - Larger windows
 - Stained glass

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Grand tall designs with increased height of towers
 - New design elements allowed for re-distribution of weight so towers would not crush themselves

Canterbury Cathedral,
Kent, England



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Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire, England

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Flying buttresses
 - Designed to redistribute weight away from walls to the ground
 - Also decorative



St. Vitus Cathedral, Prague, Czech Republic

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Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Pointed arches
 - Much more supportive than rounded arches, gave the illusion of pointing towards heaven



Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire, England

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Vaulted Ceilings
 - Distributed weight of floors and weight above
 - Gave increased impression of height and magnificence

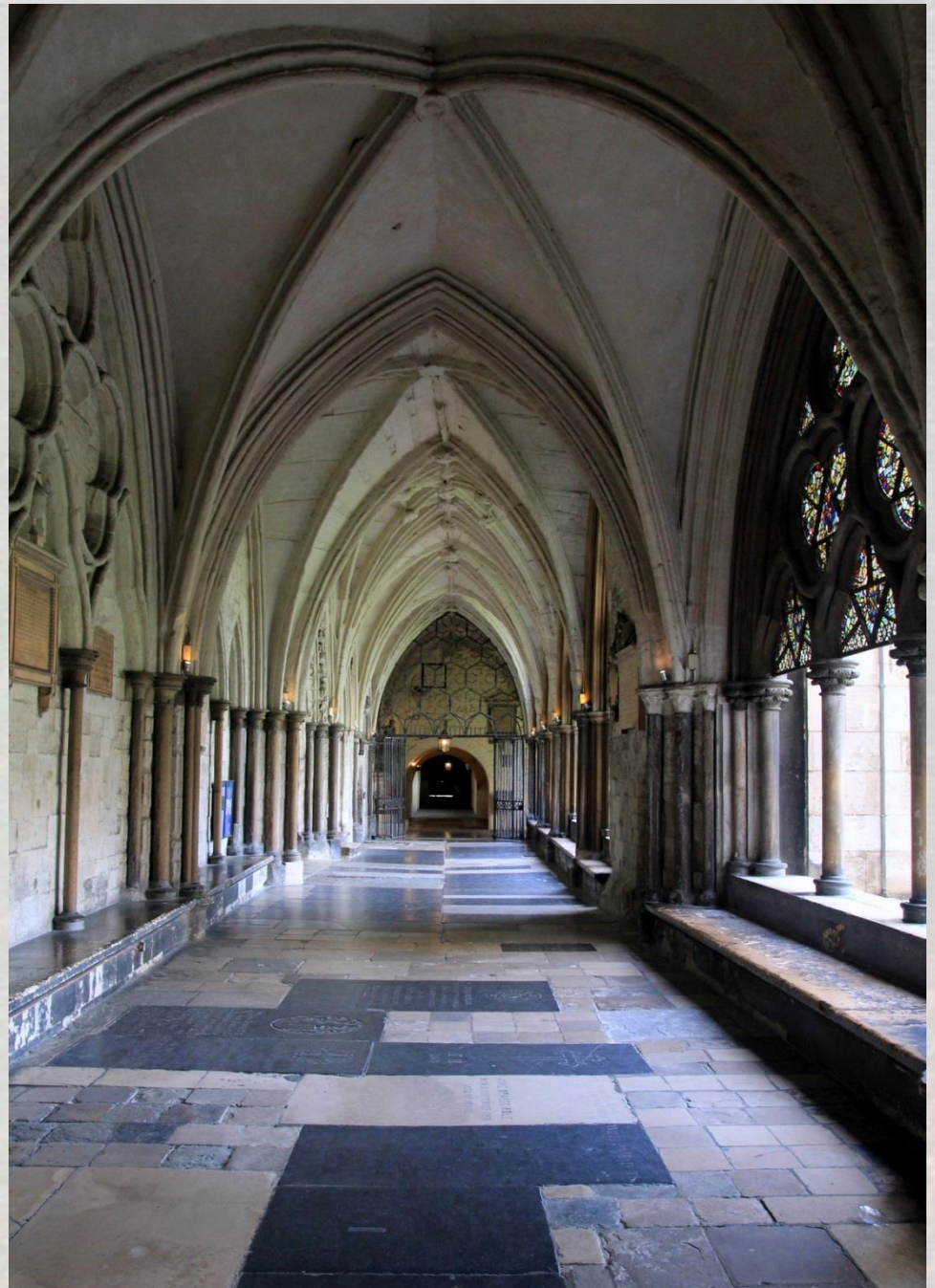


Malbork Castle, Poland

Art History



Westminster Abbey, London,
England



Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Light and airy interiors
 - Taller ceilings with larger windows, than prior buildings
 - Could support slate roofs to keep interiors dryer

Cologne Cathedral, Cologne, Germany





Cologne Cathedral, Cologne, Germany

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Gargoyles
 - Used as rain spouts
 - Also meant to play into superstitions of time and scare people into seeking refuge inside churches
 - Especially lower classes





Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France

Characteristics of Gothic Architecture

- Emphasis on Decoration and Ornamentation
 - Heightened emphasis in buildings looking good, not just being functional



Salisbury Cathedral, Salisbury, England