

# HONOURS AND AWARDS

Twice a year – on the Queen’s official birthday and on New Year Day, the British press publishes the names of those individuals that the Queen has honoured. These honours include the conferment of peerages, knighthood and other awards. The key element in these honours, developed over the centuries, is the recognition of merit status and achievement of individuals of all rank and background.

Probably the most publicly acknowledged Order is that of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. This was founded at the end of the First World War to recognise the service and effort of those who had contributed to the war effort. Over the years this Order has become the means by which successive British Governments recognise the contribution to society of all its members ranging from actors to academics and for services charitable to sporting.

All members of society are eligible and often the award is extended to members of the British expatriate community throughout the world for their service in promoting Britain in one manner or another. This Order is divided into five classes, of which the more easily recognisable are the Commander - CBE, Officer – OBE and Member - MBE



by  
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Photograph of  
state visit to UK  
of King Fahad  
showing:

- The Queen Mother - Order of the Garter and Royal Household Orders.
- Prince Phillip – the Order of Abdulaziz, Order of Merit and medals.
- King Fahad – Royal Victorian Chain.
- Queen Elizabeth – Collar of the Order of Abdulaziz.

The British Honours system is a complex one reflecting the development of British society through the ages. Peerages such as baronies evolved from the means by which the monarch administered and ruled and with the passage of time developed into a hierarchy – dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts and barons.

In addition to Orders there are awards for Gallantry – the Victoria Cross, instituted in 1856, takes precedence over all other awards. It is the reward for acts of supreme heroism, carried out at the utmost risk to life in the presence of the enemy and was the first British gallantry award open to all ranks. The

Orders such as those of the Garter and Thistle evolved as Orders of Chivalry to support royal authority and today the limited membership, appointed as a personal gift of the Queen, is made up of pre-eminent members of society who have achieved high office such as past Prime Ministers.



The Royal Victorian Order is awarded as recognition by the monarch for services rendered. Other Orders such as the Order of the Bath reward government servants in both the civil and military services and the Order of St. Michael and St. George traditionally rewards members of the Diplomatic Corps.