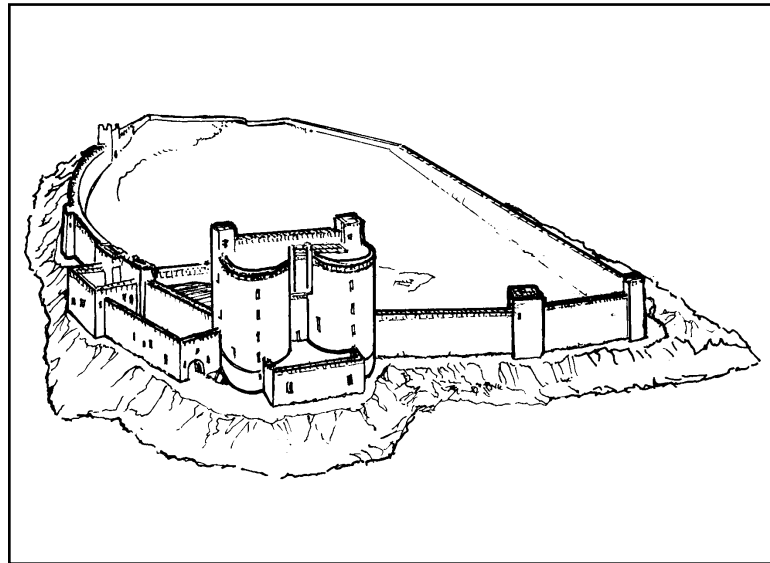
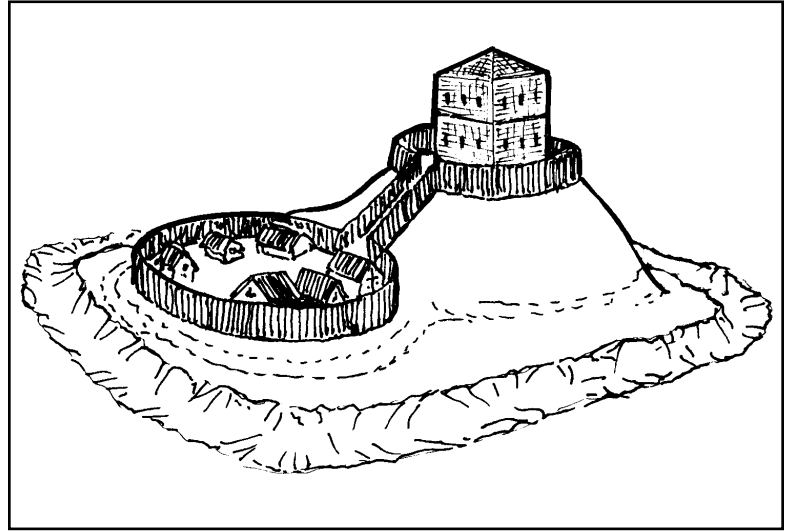


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Outside the Castle

The first castles looked a lot like early American forts. First, a large ditch, or *moat*, was dug, and the dirt from it was used to make a giant mound in the middle. At the top of this mound, a fence of sharpened wooden stakes, called a *palisade*, was built with a wooden tower in the middle. This tower, sometimes called a *keep*, was the strongest and most secure part of the castle. The lord could live here and fight if the enemy ever got close. The keep could only be reached by climbing up a tall ladder, which was pulled up in times of war. Another fenced area surrounding the mound was called a *bailey* and held other castle buildings like stables, storerooms, and a chapel. Every castle also had its own well. These early wooden castles were better than nothing, but you can probably imagine what their main weakness was. Attackers often burned the castles to the ground!



Because of the fire danger, lords began to do away with wooden palisades during the 900s. They were replaced by sturdier stone walls that did not burn. Straw and wooden roofs were replaced by a thin type of rock called *slate*. Some lords also built towers around their castles and added *battlements* to the tops of the walls and towers. Battlements had low places called *crenels* where archers could look and shoot through and high parts called *merlons* where they could hide when under attack. Towers in a castle were well stocked with food and supplies and, in the event of an attack, could be closed off and independently defended. Castles built

later had other advances, like *arrow loops* where archers could fire arrows at attackers and still be protected. Despite all these advances, the idea of the castle was still to protect the lord, his family, and followers and to provide a base for the community.

Rebel tribes like the Welsh were always a problem, so a king often had several castles that controlled different parts of his land. Since he could not be in charge of all of them at once, he gave some of them to people he could trust. In return, these lords gave the king their loyalty and provided him with knights to fight his battles.

Armor (cont.)

Directions: Label the parts on the plate armor below. Choose a shield and two weapons that you would like to have and add them to the picture.

