Welcome to Edinburgh Castle!
I’m Jamie – the lion-keeper’s apprentice. Did you know Scotland’s kings and queens used to have a royal zoo? They used the animals to impress and scare their visitors!

There are lots of other animals around the castle too. Can you help me find them?

Your shield

We’ve found lots of animals around the castle today – real and imaginary. Some of the animals we saw were inside shield shapes. These are called coats of arms because knights would decorate their coats with the symbols so you could tell who was who when they had their armour on.

Invent or choose animals special enough to draw here on your own shield.

Credits: Character illustrations by Gingerpaws. Map illustration by David Lawrence.
King of beasts

When he was king of Scotland 700 years ago, Robert the Bruce had a pet lion! Today, a lion guards the gateway into the castle.

What colour is it?
Can you roar and pose like the lion?

Bang!

When the One o’Clock gun was first fired in 1861, all the pigeons on the Castle Rock got a shock and took off!

Find the gun and flap like a pigeon!

High above

At the bottom of the Lang Stairs, look up! The decoration high on the wall remembers Thomas Randolf who took charge of the castle by climbing up the steep rocky cliffs.

What animal can you see carved onto the decoration?

Jousting tournaments

Look down over the wall at the city. Below the castle there were once fields where kings and queens held jousts, with colourful tents, galloping horses and flying hawks.

What animal can you see in Hospital Square today?

Royal unicorns

Unicorns were a symbol of Scotland’s royal family.

How many unicorns can you count around Crown Square?

Heavy load

Mons Meg is an enormous cannon. It would have been brought here on wheels, pulled by strong horses.

Can you find out how far it could fire a gun stone?
Make a noise like a horse!

Last stop

Near Mons Meg, there is a place where much-loved animals who lived in the castle are buried.

What type of animal?

Kings and Queens
And partners too
All dressed up
In Royal Blue

Count to three!
Bend your knees! Wave to the King!
Curtsey to the Queen!
How many unicorns Have you seen?

Here’s a rhyme about Scotland’s kings and queens. Can you clap along and do the actions?

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