

English words derived from French

The appearance of French words in the English language goes back to the Norman Conquest of **1066**. The Normans brought their own dialect of French, **Norman-French**, to England, and continuing contact with the rest of France during the Middle English period meant that French words were being adopted into English all the time. This process of borrowing words has continued until the present day. Common English words such as *action, bucket, calendar, courtesy, damage, envy, face, grief, honour, joy, labour, marriage, noise, opinion, people, quality, reason, sound, task, use, vision,* and *waste* all come from French.

French words are formal

Some words taken into English from French, such as *commence* and *regard*, are considered more formal words than the equivalent English words *begin* and *look at*. This is because French was the language of important people in England throughout much of the Middle Ages. English people at that time, and ever since, have tended to use French words when they want to impress other people.