

# Famous Portraits Series

**Charles V** as Holy Roman Emperor (1519-1556)  
**Charles I** as King of Spain (1516-1556)  
 Born: 24 Feb. 1500 Died: 21 Sep. 1558 (Aged 58)



**1. Charles aged 10**  
 Flemish school  
 Unknown artist (c.1510)



**2. Charles V aged 19**  
 Artist: Bernard van Orley  
 (1519)



**3. Charles V aged 32**  
 Artist: Jakob Seisenegger  
 (1532)



**4. Charles V aged 50**  
 Artist: Titian  
 (c.1550)



**5. Charles V aged 56**  
 Rijksmuseum  
 Unknown artist (c.1556)



**6. Charles V in retirement**  
 3D digital artist:  
 Curtis Durane (2020)

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## Image Sources:

1. 34 Charles V young ideas | charles, catherine of aragon, spain history (pinterest.com)
2. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/41/Barend\\_van\\_Orley\\_-\\_Portrait\\_of\\_Charles\\_V\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/41/Barend_van_Orley_-_Portrait_of_Charles_V_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)
3. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/76/Jakob\\_Seisenegger\\_001.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/76/Jakob_Seisenegger_001.jpg)
4. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/42/Emperor\\_Charles\\_V\\_seated\\_%28Titian%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/42/Emperor_Charles_V_seated_%28Titian%29.jpg)
5. [https://happyhappybirthday.net/en/age/charles-v-holy-roman-emperor-person\\_xyfaa#&gid=1&pid=3](https://happyhappybirthday.net/en/age/charles-v-holy-roman-emperor-person_xyfaa#&gid=1&pid=3)
6. <https://curtisdurane.artstation.com/projects/GXwbBV>

**Charles V** came from the prestigious Austrian House of Habsburg. He was born and brought up mainly in the Low Countries (today's Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). By the time he was 16 he inherited the Kingdom of Spain from his maternal grandfather Ferdinand II. When his paternal grandfather Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor died in 1519, Charles was one of the candidates, together with King Francis I of France and King Henry VIII of England for the next Holy Roman Emperor. Since he came from the influential House of Habsburg, the German electors chose Charles, who became Holy Roman Emperor as Charles V. Besides these two crowns, Charles inherited many other titles, such as: King of Naples and Sicily, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Brabant and Luxembourg, Count of Flanders, Brabant, Artois and Barcelona, King of the Western and Eastern Indies, Lord of the Islands and Main Ocean Sea.

Charles ruled when Europe was passing through turbulent times: the Protestant Reformation and the religious wars in Germany; the war against France for the control of Italy; the conquests by the Ottoman Turks in Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Mediterranean; the setting up and consolidation of the Spanish colonial empire in America. All this left a mark on his health in later life, to the extent that in 1556 he decided to abdicate and pass on his powers and titles to his successors. His son Philip II inherited Spain, Naples, Sicily, the Low Countries and the Spanish colonial empire. His younger brother Ferdinand I inherited the Austrian Habsburg lands and the title of Holy Roman Emperor. In 1557 he retired to the Monastery of Yuste in Spain where he died the following year.

Charles was deeply religious and saw it as his duty to bring about a peaceful compromise between Catholics and Protestants and to defend Christendom against the Ottoman threat. Although he was involved in many wars during his long reign, he never went on military campaigns himself, but entrusted this task to his chosen generals.

**Further reading:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_V,\\_Holy\\_Roman\\_Emperor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_V,_Holy_Roman_Emperor)

<http://www.holyromanempireassociation.com/holy-roman-emperor-charles-v.html>

### Questions

1. Which TWO titles made Charles a powerful and influential ruler in Europe?
2. Why did Charles possess so many titles?
3. Why is Charles considered as the first King of a united Spain?
4. List FOUR challenges which Charles had to address when he was in power?
5. In which of these four challenges did he succeed or fail to meet his expectations? Explain your answer.
6. Contrary to his main rival Francis I of France, Charles did not take part in military campaigns. Why do you think this was so?
7. Do you think that Charles was satisfied with his career when he decided to abdicate in 1556?
8. Choose FOUR adjectives which describe Charles's character and personality.