

How Accused Witches Were Punished

Witch hunters often got false confessions from people by torturing them until they were in so much pain that they would say anything to get them to stop. This was so they could document it and look good to others. If someone confessed they were punished by being burnt alive or hung. If they did not confess they were usually tortured by having legs and arms broken or twisted, being crushed, being beaten, starved, and many other horrible things. People were tortured sometimes until they were forced to name others' as witches too. Children were tortured so they would say their parents were witches. History tells us that the reason people were killed by burning at the stake was witches were thought to be magical, and burning was the only way that was thought to get rid of this evil magic.

In some countries in Europe people were tortured more than in others. Germany is thought to have been the worst, where people were tortured for days. It is also thought that the most people were executed here. In Spain and Italy they were only allowed to torture people for an hour. In England torture was illegal, but witches were still hung or burned at the stake.

When hunting for witches, people's homes could be searched. Along with herbs, other things that were found that were thought of as tools of witch craft were brooms, certain kinds of knives, and being found naked. So how were you supposed to sweep your floors or take a bath?