

Us holiday

[Art & Culture](#), [Holidays](#)



Learn more about holidays celebrated by many Americans, such as New Year's Day, Independence Day, and Thanksgiving. Americans celebrate a variety of federal holidays and other national observances throughout the year. American holidays can be secular, religious, international, or uniquely American. With the wide variety of federal holidays, and the many levels of American government, it can be confusing to determine what public and private facilities are open on or around a given federal holiday. You can usually find such information in the daily newspaper or by calling the office you wish to visit.

The following are American federal holidays and other common national observances. Federal holidays are indicated as such. New Year's Day is January 1. The celebration of this federal holiday begins the night before, when Americans gather to wish each other a happy and prosperous coming year. Many Americans make New Year's resolutions. Martin Luther King Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday in January. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was an African-American clergyman who is recognized for his tireless efforts to win civil rights for all people through nonviolent means.

Groundhog Day is February 2, and has been celebrated since 1887. On Groundhog Day, crowds gather in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to see if groundhog Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow after emerging from his burrow, thus predicting six more weeks of winter weather. Valentine's Day is celebrated on February 14. The day was named after an early Christian martyr, and on Valentine's Day, Americans give presents like candy or

flowers to the ones they love. The first mass-produced valentine cards were sold in the 1840s.

Washington's Birthday is a federal holiday observed the third Monday of February to honor George Washington, the first President of the United States. This date is commonly called Presidents' Day and many groups honor the legacy of past presidents on this date. Easter falls on a spring Sunday that varies from year to year. Easter is a Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For Christians, Easter is a day of religious services and the gathering of family. Many Americans follow old traditions of coloring hard-boiled eggs and giving children baskets of candy.

Earth Day is observed on April 22. First celebrated in 1970 in the United States, it inspired national legislation such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. Earth Day is designed to promote ecology, encourage respect for life on earth, and highlight concern over pollution of the soil, air, and water. National Arbor Day was proclaimed as the last Friday in April by President Richard Nixon in 1970. A number of state Arbor Days are observed at other times to coincide with the best tree planting weather, from January and February in the south to May in the far north.

The observance began in 1872, when Nebraska settlers and homesteaders were urged to plant trees on the largely treeless plains. Mother's Day celebrates mothers every second Sunday of May. President Woodrow Wilson, who issued a proclamation in 1914, asked Americans to give a public expression of reverence to mothers on this day. Carnations have come to represent Mother's Day, following President William McKinley's habit of

always wearing a white carnation, his mother's favorite flower. Memorial Day is a federal holiday observed the last Monday of May.

It originally honored the people killed in the American Civil War, but has become a day on which the American dead of all wars, and the dead generally, are remembered in special programs held in cemeteries, churches, and other public meeting places. The flying of the American flag is widespread. Flag Day, celebrated June 14, has been a presidentially proclaimed observance since 1916. Although Flag Day is not a federal holiday, Americans are encouraged to display the flag outside their homes and businesses on this day to honor the history and heritage the American flag represents.

Father's Day celebrates fathers every third Sunday of June. Father's Day began in 1909 in Spokane, Washington, when a daughter requested a special day to honor her father, a Civil War veteran who raised his children after his wife died. The first presidential proclamation honoring fathers was issued in 1966 by President Lyndon Johnson. Independence Day is July 4. This federal holiday honors the nation's birthday - the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. It is a day of picnics and patriotic parades, a night of concerts and fireworks.

The flying of the American flag is widespread. Labor Day is the first Monday of September. This federal holiday honors the nation's working people, typically with parades. For most Americans it marks the end of the summer vacation season and the start of the school year. Columbus Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the second Monday in October. The day

commemorates October 12, 1492, when Italian navigator Christopher Columbus landed in the New World. The holiday was first proclaimed in 1937 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Halloween is celebrated on October 31. On Halloween, American children dress up in funny or scary costumes and go "trick or treating" by knocking on doors in their neighborhood. The neighbors are expected to respond by giving them small gifts of candy or money. Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11. Originally called Armistice Day, this federal holiday was established to honor Americans who had served in World War I, but it now honors veterans of all wars in which the U. S. has fought. Veterans' organizations hold parades, and the president places a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. Thanksgiving Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November. In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest. Many regard this event as the nation's first Thanksgiving. The Thanksgiving feast became a national tradition and almost always includes some of the foods served at the first feast: roast turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, and pumpkin pie. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is December 7.

In 1994, Congress designated this national observance to honor the more than 2,400 military service personnel who died on this date in 1941, during the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, by Japanese forces. The attack on Pearl Harbor caused the United States to enter World War II. Christmas Day is a federal holiday celebrated on December 25. Christmas is a Christian holiday marking the birth of the Christ Child. Decorating houses and yards

with lights, putting up Christmas trees, giving gifts, and sending greeting cards have become holiday traditions even for many non-Christian Americans.