

THANKSGIVING DAY



Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday celebrated on various dates in Canada, the United States, some of the Caribbean islands, and Liberia. It began as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest and of the preceding year. Similarly named festival holidays occur in Germany and Japan. Thanksgiving is celebrated on the second Monday of October in Canada and on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States, and around the same part of the year in other places. Although Thanksgiving has historical roots in religious and cultural traditions, it has long been celebrated as a secular holiday as well.

Dates when Thanksgiving is celebrated

Generally

- *2nd Monday in October (Canada)
- *1st Thursday in November (Liberia)
- *Last Wednesday in November (Norfolk Island)
- *Fourth Thursday in November (U.S.)

2018 date

- *October 8, 2018 (Canada);
- *November 1, 2018 (Liberia);
- *November 28, 2018 (Norfolk Island);
- *November 22, 2018 (U.S.)

History of Thanksgiving day



Picture showing one of the first Thanksgiving day.

The New England colonists were accustomed to regularly celebrating "Thanksgivings," days of prayer thanking God for blessings such as military victory or the end of a drought. In the United States, the modern Thanksgiving holiday tradition is traced to a sparsely documented 1621 celebration at Plymouth in present-day Massachusetts, and also to a well recorded 1619 event in Virginia. English reformed protestants who began emigrating from England in the 1620s and 1630s carried the tradition of Days of Fasting and Days of Thanksgiving with them to New England. Several days of Thanksgiving were held in early New England history that have been identified as the "First Thanksgiving" in 1621. Later in Massachusetts, religious thanksgiving services were declared by civil leaders such as Governor Bradford, who planned the colony's thanksgiving celebration and fast in 1623. The practice of holding an annual harvest festival did not become a regular affair in New England until the late 1660s. Thanksgiving proclamations were made mostly by church leaders in New England up until 1682, and then by both state and church leaders until after the American Revolution. George Washington proclaimed the first nationwide thanksgiving celebration in America marking November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God"

Fixing the date of the holiday in Canada



The earlier Thanksgiving celebrations in Canada has often been attributed to the earlier onset of winter in the North. Thanksgiving in Canada did not have a fixed date until the late 19th century. The first official Canadian Thanksgiving occurred on April 15, 1872, when the nation was celebrating the Prince of Wales' recovery from a serious illness. In 1957 the Canadian Parliament proclaimed Thanksgiving to be observed on its present date on the second Monday of October.

Fixing the date of the holiday in United States



Much as in Canada, Thanksgiving in the United States was observed on various dates throughout history. The final Thursday in November had become the customary date in most U.S. states by the beginning of the 19th century. Modern Thanksgiving was first officially called for in all states in 1863 by a presidential proclamation of Abraham Lincoln. Influenced by the campaigning of author Sarah Josepha Hale, who wrote letters to politicians for around 40 years trying to make it an official holiday, Lincoln proclaimed the date to be the final Thursday in November in an attempt to foster a sense of American unity between the Northern and Southern states. Because of the ongoing Civil War, a nationwide Thanksgiving date was not realized until Reconstruction was completed in the 1870s. On December 26, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint resolution of Congress changing the national Thanksgiving Day from the last Thursday in November to the fourth Thursday.

Traditions

Travel

One of the best things about Thanksgiving is spending time with family. Many people live far from family members and travel long distances by car, train, or plane to be with their loved ones. Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the year!

The Feast

Traditional foods are a large part of Thanksgiving celebrations. Traditional foods include turkey, stuffing, gravy, sweet potatoes, cornbread, mashed potatoes, and cranberry sauce. Many people serve pie for dessert at the end of the meal. Popular pie flavors are pumpkin, pecan, sweet potato, and apple.

The Wishbone

Some families include breaking the turkey's wishbone as part of their celebration. The wishbone is found attached to the breast meat in the turkey's chest. After the meat has been removed and the wishbone has had a chance to become dry and brittle, two people each take one end of the bone, make a wish, and pull. Whoever ends up with the larger part of the bone gets their wish

The Turkey Pardon

Each year at Thanksgiving, the President of the United States receives a gift of a live turkey (along with an alternate in case something happens to the official turkey). At a White House ceremony, the president traditionally "pardons" the National Thanksgiving Turkey and the alternate turkeys, allowing them to live out the rest of their lives on a farm.

Helping Others

Many generous folks use Thanksgiving as an opportunity to help the less fortunate. Some people volunteer to serve food at homeless shelters on Thanksgiving Day and others donate to shelters or participate in canned food drives.

TV

Television also plays a part in Thanksgiving celebrations. Many families watch the New York City Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The parade includes marching bands, floats, songs and performances from Broadway musicals, and giant helium-filled balloons! People may also enjoy televised football games.

After the Meal

After the feast families often do additional activities. Some like to take walks after eating such a large meal. Some people take naps. Others sit down together to play board or card games together.

Popular Thanksgiving day meals

There are many foods associated with the holiday of Thanksgiving, including turkey and cookies. Other common foods and drink include:

- Apple Cider
- Hot Chocolate
- Custard
- Candy Canes
- Buttered Rum
- Ham
- Egg Nog
- Fruit Cake
- Plum Pudding
- Mixed Nuts
- Stuffing
- Dumplings
- Fudge



We wish you nice Thanksgiving day!

Thanks for your attention

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