

Holidays in the USA



- Every nation and every country has its own customs and traditions. They reflect the history of the country and its cultural and religious traditions. There are some special holidays which are usually celebrated in a particular country. But there are also international holidays which are celebrated in all countries world-wide.



The history of the Americans is history of immigration. Immigrants brought their customs and traditions. That's why the USA is a mixture of different cultures.



International holidays

International holidays are holidays celebrated in different parts of the world – New Year, Christmas, St. Patrick's Day , Easter, Halloween and so on.

St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on the 17th of March. St. Patrick is a patron of Ireland, who converted the Irish to Christianity. There are a lot of Irish people in the USA, that's why St. Patrick is very popular here.

Celebrations include prominent displays of the color green, feasting, and numerous parades. The holiday has been celebrated on the North American continent since the late 18th century.



Halloween

- Halloween is a festival that takes place on October 31. In the United States children wear costumes and masks and go trick-or-treating. Many of them carve jack-o'-lanterns out of pumpkins. Fortunetelling and storytelling about ghosts and witches are popular activities.
- Halloween developed from new year festivals and festivals of the dead. Christian church established a festival on November 1 called All Saints' Day so that people could continue to celebrate their festivals.



Father's Day

People in the United States honor their fathers with special day: Father's Day. This holiday is celebrated on the third Sunday in June.

Father's Day dates back to 1909, when one daughter, a certain Mrs. Dodd from Spokane, Washington, wanted to honor her own father who had raised four sons and a daughter after her mother's death. Although the first Father's Day was observed in Spokane in 1910 and it has been likewise observed in many other states for many decades, Father's Day did not become a national holiday until Senator Margaret Chase Smith helped to establish it as such in 1972.

Giving cards and gifts is the tradition of this holiday. Children make them in schools. Many people make their own presents.



Mother's Day

In the United States Americans honor their mothers and grandmothers, on the second Sunday in May. This day is set aside to show love and respect for mother. On Mother's Day children give thanks for the support, love, care. Giving cards and gifts is also tradition. Children often make Mother's Day gifts in school - decorated boxes and picture frames. Another common gift for mothers is the "mother ring," a ring set with the birthstones of each of the members of the family.



National holidays in the USA

Talking about national holidays in the USA I must say that many states have holidays of their own, but there are also major holidays observed in nearly all the USA. Let's talk about some of them.

On January 15th, people in the United States celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. He was a great civil rights leader who fought against racial discrimination. He said that people should be judged by their characters, and not the color of their skin. He believed in integration. He received national attention when he protested the injustice of segregated buses in Alabama.

Martin Luther King is remembered in church memorial services, marches, and public ceremonies. People also listen to his speeches, watch TV documentaries. In schools, students read about this leader, study his writings and celebrate his memory with special programs. Politicians and performers also participate in celebrations to honor Martin Luther King.



Memorial Day

The last Monday in May is Memorial Day. This is a national holiday to remember the dead. The first Memorial Day was many years ago after the Civil War (1861–1865). After the war, people wanted to remember the dead. So around 1866, people began to decorate the graves of Civil War soldiers. People called this day Decoration Day or Poppy Day (Poppies are small red flowers).

On the Memorial Day, Americans honor the servicemen who gave their lives in past wars. Schools, clubs and churches decorate the cemeteries. They put up the flags on the graves of the army, navy and airmen. They hold memorial services in churches, halls, parks and cemeteries.



Independence Day

July 4th is Independence Day. Another name for Independence Day is the Fourth of July. On this day in 1776 the final of the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted.

Government offices, banks, and schools close. Most people don't go to work. Families and friends get together outside for picnics.

Traditionally the Fourth of July is celebrate with firing of guns and fireworks, parades open – air meetings and speeches praising “Americanism, democracy, free enterprise.”

It is also a day to think about freedom. The Declaration of Independence says everyone has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Declaration of Independence more than 200 years old, but its ideas are important today.



