



# FATHER'S DAY

## Facts for Students

Father's Day is a day that is enjoyed around the world, celebrating all father figures and male role models, including fathers, carers, uncles, grandfathers and godfathers.

### The first Father's Day

In 1909, a woman named Sonora Smart Dodd heard Anna Jarvis (one of the first American pioneers of Mother's Day) giving a Mother's Day sermon at church. Inspired by Jarvis' efforts to campaign for an official Mother's Day, Dodd began work to create a Father's Day that would equal Jarvis' Mother's Day.

Dodd was a true believer in Father's Day due to her love of her father, William Jackson Smart. Smart was an American Civil War Veteran who managed to raise his six children by himself after the death of his wife left him widowed in 1898. Dodd first suggested that the date of the newborn event could be on her father's birthday, 5 June, however it was decided that this was not enough time to prepare. Instead, the first ever Father's Day was celebrated by Americans on the third Sunday of June, 19 June 1910.

Manufacturers of ties, socks, hats, golf clubs and other male-appropriate gifts eagerly embraced the day, using it to promote their product as the perfect Father's Day gift.

### Father's Day around the world

Father's Day is celebrated on different days of the year by different countries. Some countries celebrate in June, while others celebrate in March or September.

#### Germany

In Germany, Father's Day is the same day as Ascension Day, which is a public holiday on the Thursday, 40 days after Easter. For this reason, the day is sometimes also known as Vatertag meaning 'Father's Day' or Maennertag or Herrentag meaning 'Men's Day'. Traditionally, men would go on walks through fields, pulling wagons laden with food and beer, praying for a good harvest.





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## Italy

In Italy, Roman Catholics celebrate fathers on Saint Joseph's Day which is 19 March. Saint Joseph is the patron of workers and is the protector of the family. This day is celebrated with a traditional feast of bread, soup, macaroni, stuffed artichokes and a Saint Joseph's Sfinge (a cream puff filled with ricotta, topped with fruit such as cherries and orange).

## Thailand

In Thailand, Father's Day is the same day as the King's birthday. Thailand's current monarch is King Bhumibol Adulyadej whose birthday is the 5 December. On this day, Thai people give a Canna flower ('Dok put ta ruk sa' in Thai) to their fathers or grandfathers and wear yellow, the King's colour. On this day there are religious ceremonies all over Thailand and at night there are fireworks and celebrations in the street.

## Father's Day in Australia

In Australia, Father's Day is celebrated on the first Sunday of September. On this day we celebrate the love and dedication of fathers, step-fathers, guardians, fathers-in-law, uncles, grandfathers and other significant male role models. A father figure could be described as someone who is a teacher, carer, friend and/or role model.

## Father's Day fast facts

- Can you say the word father in another language?  
Father is 'père' in French, 'ojciec' in Polish, 'vader' in Dutch, 'vater' in German and 'padre' in both Italian and Spanish.
- The traditional flower of Father's Day is a rose. Red roses are for living fathers and white roses are for fathers who have died.
- There are well over 4.6 million fathers in Australia.
- Father's Day became an increasingly popular celebration during World War II, when many fathers were away at war.
- In Australia, statistically, most dads (over 40% of them) have two children. Interestingly, over one third of these men became fathers between 25 and 30 years of age.





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- It's not just fathers who are celebrated, Japan has a National Children's Day called 'Kodomo no Hi'. Originally, this day celebrated only sons, but now both sons and daughters are celebrated.
- During the 1920s and 1930s it was suggested that Mother's Day and Father's Day should be combined to form a Parent's Day. Do you think this is a good idea?
- Every year, Australians spend about \$1.36 billion on Mother's Day and \$660 million on Father's Day!
- If you do not have a father, you can still use Father's Day to honour a special male in your life. This could be a relative, family friend, teacher or coach.
- Did you know that it is the father seahorse that carries the eggs and gives birth to the babies?