

2024 is Leap Year!



The next leap day will be Feb. 29, 2024.

The purpose of Leap Year is to balance the calendar. Leap Year, also known as intercalary year, happens once every four years to keep our calendar in sync with the solar year. By adding an extra day, February 29th, to the calendar, Leap Year helps to adjust the misalignment between the solar year and the calendar year, which is 365 days.

February 29th is considered Leap Day. The additional day added to February is known as Leap Day.

Centuries are not considered Leap Years, unless... While most Leap Years occur every four years, there is an exception for centuries. A year that is divisible by 100 is not a Leap Year, unless it is also divisible by 400. For example, the year 1900 was not a Leap Year, but the year 2000 was.

The concept of Leap Year dates back to ancient times. The ancient Egyptians and Romans recognized the need for a Leap Year to maintain a consistent calendar.

Julius Caesar introduced the first leap year around 46 B.C., but his Julian calendar had only one rule: Any year evenly divisible by four would be a leap year. That created too many leap years, but the math wasn't tweaked until Pope Gregory XIII introduced his Gregorian calendar more than 1,500 years later.

Anthony, Texas and Anthony, New Mexico are known as the "Leap Year Capitals." These neighboring cities engage in festive celebrations and attract tourists to commemorate February 29th.

Leap Year proposals have a tradition. In several cultures, it is believed that women can propose to men on Leap Day. This tradition is said to have originated in Ireland.

After Pope Gregory XIII instituted the Gregorian calendar, the idea of adding Feb. 29 every four years seemed so ridiculous that a British play joked it was a day when women should trade their dresses for "breeches" and act like men. The play was meant as satire, but some early feminists must have been inspired; by the 1700s, women were using leap day to propose to the men in their lives. The tradition—now called Bachelor's Day or Sadie Hawkins Day—peaked in the early 1900s and continues today in the U.K., where some retailers even offer discount packages to women popping the question.

The custom has also been attributed to various historical figures including St. Bridget, who is said to have complained to St. Patrick that women had to wait too long for their suitor to

pop the question. The obliging Patrick supposedly gave women one day to propose, says the BBC.

Another tale claims that Queen Margaret of Scotland (who would have been only 5 years old at the time, so take it with a grain of salt) enacted a law setting fines for men who turned down marriage proposals from women during a leap year. It's thought that the basis for the tradition likely goes back to the time when Feb. 29 wasn't recognized by English law; if the day had no legal status, it was OK to break with convention and a woman could propose.

There are other traditions that put a price on saying "no." If a man doesn't accept a leap year proposal, it will cost him. In Denmark, a man refusing a woman's Feb. 29 proposal must give her a dozen pairs of gloves, according to *The Mirror*. In Finland, an uninterested gentleman must give his spurned suitor enough fabric to make a skirt.

The Salem witch trials are connected to leap day. The Salem witch trials weren't a fun time in Colonial America, and there was a particularly negative connection with leap day. The first warrants for arrest in the Salem witch trials went out on Feb. 29, 1692.

What happens if you are born on leap day? People born on leap day are often called "leaplings" or "leapers." Feb. 29 is the rarest birthday someone could have. Still, at least 5 million people celebrate their birthday on leap day, according to the History Channel. Your odds of being born on Feb. 29 are one-in-1,461.

Only Swedes and Hobbits celebrate Feb. 30 Feb. 30? This even rarer date occurred in Sweden and Finland in 1712, when they added an extra leap day to February to help catch up their outdated Julian calendar with the new Gregorian calendar. There is, however, one race of people who celebrate Feb. 30 every year: Hobbits. The wee folk of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* universe observe 12 extra long 30-day months every year—including *Solmath* (translated in the text to *February*).

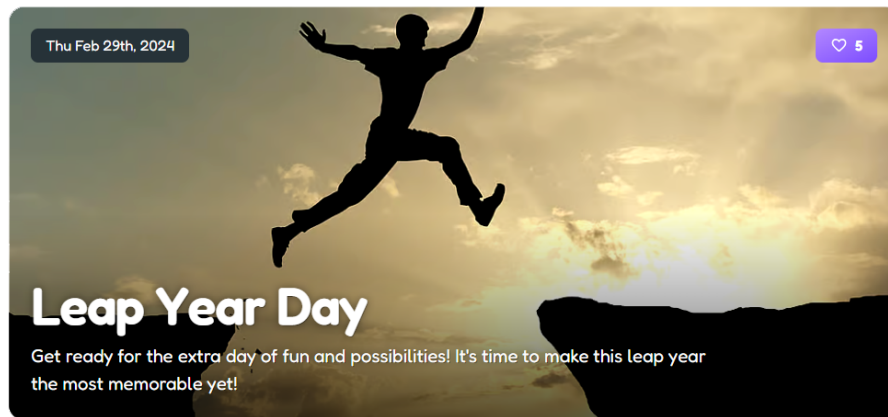
There is an official leap day cocktail. And it's called ... the Leap Day Cocktail! This colorful cousin of the martini was invented by pioneering bartender Harry Craddock at London's Savoy Hotel in 1928. According to the 1930 *Savoy Cocktail Book*, "It is said to have been responsible for more proposals than any other cocktail ever mixed." You can make your own leap day cocktail with Craddock's original recipe:

1 dash lemon juice | 2/3 gin | 1/6 Grand Marnier | 1/6 sweet vermouth
Shake, serve, garnish with a lemon peel and enjoy the flood of bittersweet flavors.

Is Feb. 29 good luck or bad luck? Depends who you ask! According to an old Scottish aphorism, "leap year was ne'er a good sheep year." The superstition that leap days are particularly lucky or unlucky has been debated through history and across cultures, and there's still no clear answer. For one thing, it's bad luck if you're a prisoner on a one-year sentence that spans a leap day. Also, bad news if you work on a fixed annual salary—no extra pay for that extra day. On the other hand, leap day is great luck if you pay a fixed monthly rent (one free day of living!), or if you're Hattie McDaniel, in which case Feb. 29, 1940, was the day you became the first African American to win an Oscar, for your role as Mammy in *Gone With the Wind*.

Sources: facts.net/general/18-leap-year-facts, rd.com/article/february-29th-leap-year-facts, usatoday.com/story/news/2024/01/06/what-is-a-leap-year/72108115007, thoughtco.com/things-you-didnt-know-about-leap-year-4864254

2024 Leap Year!



Leap Year Day | Get ready for the extra day of fun and possibilities! It's time to make this leap year the most memorable yet! Feel like things are getting on top of you, and you can't keep up? Don't worry – Leap Year Day is a free day that only comes around once every four years! Use it to catch up, slow down, and prepare yourself for another four years of hectic madness...

Source: daysoftheyear.com/days/leap-year-day

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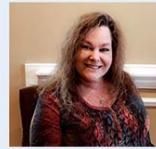
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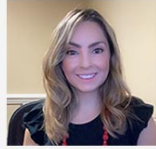
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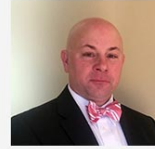
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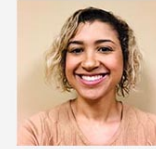
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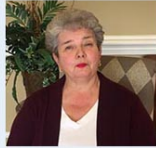
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