

Celebrations

1 I'm sorry, I can't

Start with 'I'm sorry, I can't ...' and answer the questions so they are true for you.

Example: Can you help me paint my house this evening? – I'm sorry, I can't. I'm meeting a friend this evening.

1. Can you look after my two-year-old twins next Saturday? _____
2. Can you come to my house tomorrow to look at my holiday photos? _____
3. Can you come on holiday with me next year? _____
4. Can you come to my house for dinner on Christmas Day? _____
5. Can you talk to my bank manager for me on Friday? _____

2 Have you ever...?

First fill in the correct form of the verb in brackets. Then match the questions to the answers.

1. Have you ever _____ (eat) sushi?
2. Have you ever _____ (try) Irish whiskey?
3. Have you ever _____ (have) a party on the beach?
4. Have you ever _____ (give) a speech in public?
5. Have you ever _____ (get drunk) in front of your parents?
6. Have you ever _____ (forget) an important birthday?
7. Have you ever _____ (write) a romantic poem?
8. Have you ever _____ (be) to Asia?
9. Have you ever _____ (lose) your wallet?
10. Have you ever _____ (see) a ghost?

- a. Yes, I have. I spoke at my sister's wedding.
- b. No, I haven't! I don't believe in that sort of thing!
- c. No, I haven't. But I lost my keys and I never found them again!
- d. Yes, I have. I was in Indonesia on holiday two years ago.
- e. No, I haven't but I tasted Scotch whisky on holiday in Scotland.
- f. No, I've never got drunk at all!
- g. No, I've never done that. But my last birthday party was at a lake.
- h. No, I haven't. But I wrote my girlfriend a romantic e-mail last week!
- i. Yes, I have. I forgot my mother's birthday last year!
- j. Yes, I have. I was at a Japanese restaurant in Berlin last year.

3 Special dates

Do you know these special dates? Read the text and fill in the correct date using the short form (for example: *second – 2nd*).

first • first • first • fourth • fifth • fourteenth • twenty-fourth • twenty-fifth • twenty-sixth • thirty-first • thirty-first

The first celebration of the new year is New Year's Day on the _____ (1.) of January. In fact, this is also the last celebration of the old year, on New Year's Eve, the _____ (2.) of December. Most people celebrate with friends and family, and spend the first week of January trying to recover from the celebration!

Things are quiet then, till the _____ (3.) of February – St. Valentine's Day. This is the most romantic day of the year, a festival that celebrates love and romance. Easter is the next festival; it usually takes place in March or April. Of course, we cannot forget April Fool's Day on the _____ (4.) of April, the day of tricks and jokes. After that, there is a public holiday on the _____ (5.) of May, called May Day, a public holiday not only for workers but one that has many old traditions and customs from ancient times. In the USA, they celebrate their national holiday on the _____ (6.) of July with parties and fireworks; in Great Britain the Queen's Official Birthday is celebrated in June.

The next festivals come in autumn: Halloween is on the _____ (7.) of October. Although many people think it's an American tradition, it is actually a very old Celtic festival that travelled to the USA with Scottish and Irish emigrants in the last centuries. In Britain, Guy Fawkes' Night – or Bonfire Night – is celebrated on the _____ (8.) of November. When this is over, children start looking forward to Christmastime. Christmas Eve, on the _____ (9.) of December, is not celebrated in a very big way; most people spend the day preparing for Christmas Day, on the _____ (10.) of December. This is when people open their presents and celebrate with a big dinner. The second-last special day is Boxing Day, on the _____ (11.) of December. The origin of this day is not clear: some people think it comes from the time when the rich people gave food to poorer people (in boxes), others think it comes from the tradition of opening the money collection boxes in churches, to give this money to the poor. In any case, as soon as this day is over, people start to prepare once again for the last celebration of the old year and the first of the new, and the whole cycle begins once again!