

# Thanksgiving



# Vocabulary

- Harvest = Cosecha
- Gratitude = Gratitud
- Table = Mesa
- Pilgrims = Peregrinos
- Family = Familia
- Loved ones = Queridos
- To celebrate = Celebrar
- Celebration = Celebración
- Feast = Banquete
- Turkey = Pavo
- Meal/food = Comida
- Prayer = Oración
- Blessings = Bendiciones
- Native americans =  
Americanos nativos
- Tradition = Tradición
- Pie = Tarta
- Potatoes = Patatas
- Colonization = Colonización
- The English = Los ingleses
- Autumn = Otoño
- Dining room = Comedor

# The History of Thanksgiving

**Thanksgiving** Day is a national holiday in the United States that occurs the **fourth Thursday of every November**.

In **1621**, the Plymouth colonists and the Wampanoag shared an autumn harvest feast that is acknowledged today as one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations in the colonies. For more than two centuries, days of thanksgiving were celebrated by individual colonies and states. It wasn't until 1863, in the midst of the **Civil War**, that President **Abraham Lincoln** proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day to be held each November.



# The History of Thanksgiving

In September 1620, a small ship called the **Mayflower** left Plymouth, England, carrying 102 passengers—an assortment of **religious separatists** seeking a new home where they could freely practice their faith and other individuals lured by the promise of prosperity and land ownership in the “New World.”

After a **treacherous and uncomfortable crossing** that lasted 66 days, they dropped anchor near the tip of Cape Cod. One month later, the Mayflower crossed **Massachusetts Bay**, where the **Pilgrims**, began the work of establishing a **village at Plymouth**.



# The History of Thanksgiving



Throughout that first **brutal winter**, most of the colonists remained on board the ship, where they suffered from exposure, scurvy and outbreaks of contagious disease. Only half of the Mayflower's original passengers and crew lived to see their first New England spring. In March, the remaining settlers moved ashore, where they received an astonishing visit from a member of the **Abenaki tribe** who greeted them in English.

# The History of Thanksgiving

Several days later, he returned with another Native American, **Squanto**, a member of the Pawtuxet tribe who had been kidnapped by an English sea captain and sold into slavery before escaping.

**Squanto taught the Pilgrims** how to cultivate **corn**, extract sap from maple trees, catch **fish** in the rivers and **avoid poisonous plants**. He also helped the settlers forge an **alliance** with the Wampanoag, a local tribe, which would endure for more than 50 years.



# The History of Thanksgiving

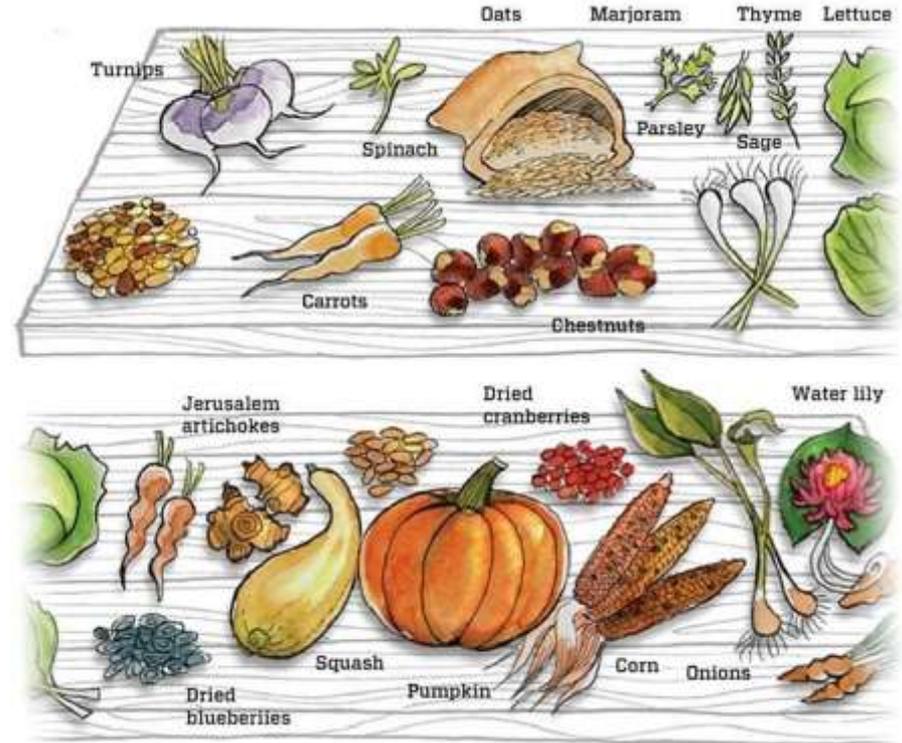
In November 1621, after the Pilgrims' first corn harvest proved successful, Governor [William Bradford](#) organized **a celebratory feast** and invited a group of the fledgling colony's Native American allies, including the Wampanoag chief Massasoit. Now remembered as America's "first Thanksgiving"—although the Pilgrims themselves may not have used the term at the time—the festival lasted for **three days**.



# The History of Thanksgiving

Historians have suggested that many of the dishes were likely prepared using **traditional Native American spices and cooking methods.**

Because the Pilgrims had no oven and the Mayflower's sugar supply had dwindled by the fall of 1621, the meal did not feature pies, cakes or other desserts, which have become a hallmark of contemporary celebrations.



# Fun Fact

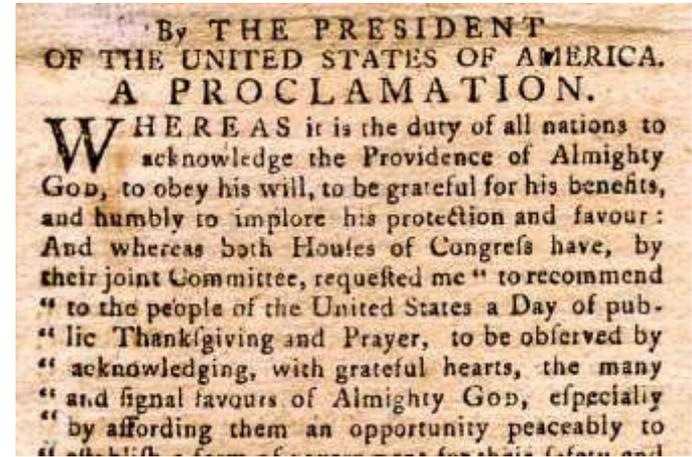
Did you know? Lobster, seal and swans were on the Pilgrims' menu.



# The History of Thanksgiving

During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress designated one or more days of thanksgiving a year, and in 1789 **George Washington** issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the national government of the United States; in it, he called upon Americans to **express their gratitude** for the happy conclusion to the country's war of independence and the successful ratification of the U.S. Constitution. His successors **John Adams** and **James Madison** also designated days of thanks during their presidencies.

In 1817, **New York** became the first of several states to officially adopt an annual Thanksgiving holiday; each celebrated it on a different day, however, and **the American South remained largely unfamiliar with the tradition.**



# The History of Thanksgiving

In 1863 at the height of the **Civil War**, **Abraham Lincoln** gave a proclamation asking all Americans to ask God to “heal the wounds of the nation.”

He scheduled Thanksgiving for the final Thursday in November, and it was celebrated on that day every year until 1939, when **Franklin D. Roosevelt** moved the holiday up a week in an attempt to spur retail sales during the **Great Depression**. Roosevelt’s plan, known derisively as **Franksgiving**, was met with passionate opposition, and in 1941 the president signed a bill making Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday in November.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brqIER2KHbE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IslqtUMwDxA>

# Thanksgiving Traditions

In many American households, the Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance; instead, it now centers on **cooking** and **sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends**. Turkey, a Thanksgiving staple so popular it has become all but synonymous with the holiday, may or may not have been on the menu when the Pilgrims hosted the feast in 1621.

Today, however, nearly **90 percent** of Americans eat turkey on Thanksgiving, according to the National Turkey Federation. Other traditional foods include **stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie**. Volunteering is a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and host free dinners for the less fortunate.





# Thanksgiving Traditions

**Parades** have also become an integral part of the holiday in cities and towns across the United States. Presented by Macy's department store since 1924, New York City's Thanksgiving Day parade is the largest and most famous, attracting some 2 to 3 million spectators along its 2.5-mile route and drawing an enormous television audience. It typically features marching bands, performers, elaborate floats conveying various celebrities and **giant balloons** shaped like cartoon characters.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpPeeUtN5Sc>

# Thanksgiving Traditions

Beginning in the mid-20th century and perhaps even earlier, the president of the United States has “**pardoned**” one or two Thanksgiving turkeys each year, sparing the birds from slaughter and sending them to a **farm** for retirement. A number of U.S. governors also perform the annual turkey pardoning ritual.



# Controversy

Some Native Americans and many others take issue with how the Thanksgiving story is presented to the American public, and especially to schoolchildren. In their view, the traditional narrative **paints a deceptively sunny portrait of relations between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people**, masking the **long and bloody history** of conflict between Native Americans and European settlers that resulted in the **deaths of tens of thousands**.

Since 1970, protesters have gathered on the day designated as Thanksgiving at the top of Cole's Hill, which overlooks Plymouth Rock, to commemorate a "**National Day of Mourning**." Similar events are held in other parts of the country.

