

Nothing Trivial



It is a little-known fact that January 4 is Trivia Day. Ahh, trivia, which for many is considered useless or trivial knowledge. But the word *trivia* has nothing to do with the useless or unimportant.

Rather, it comes from the Latin word *trivium*, which means “crossroads” or “place where three roads meet.” From *trivium* came the word *trivialis*, meaning “found everywhere” or “commonplace.” In medieval times, the *Trivium* of academia referred to a threefold curriculum of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, as opposed to the *Quadrivium* of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. In fact, the *Trivium* was considered the essential foundation of a full liberal arts education as far back as in ancient Greece, as explained by Plato in his dialogues. As you can see, there is nothing at all trivial about the *Trivium* or about the meaning of the word *trivia*.

Researchers even argue that trivia games are good for the brain. People enjoy guessing answers to questions about little-known facts. Psychology professor John Kouinos explains that your brain experiences a dopamine rush when getting the answer right. It just makes the brain feel good. Kouinos compares collecting facts to a person who collects stamps. “The more, and the rarer, the better,” he says. Psychologist Deborah Stokes also points out that retaining information, no matter how useless that information may be, is like exercise for the frontal cortex of the brain as it ages. Moreover, trivia games often don’t happen in isolation. People enjoy playing trivia games in social settings, which is an added bonus to brain health.

To get you ready for your next trivia challenge, check out these weird bits of knowledge: Oscar the Grouch was originally orange and didn’t turn green until the second season of *Sesame Street*; Hydrox creme-filled chocolate sandwich cookies were invented four years before Oreos; and Wayne Allwine, the voice of Mickey Mouse, married Russi Taylor, the voice of Minnie Mouse.

January Birthdays

In astrology, those born between January 1–19 are Capricorn’s Goats. Goats are focused on lofty goals; these hardworking and determined souls will prevail with grit and resilience. Those born between January 20–31 are Water Bearers of Aquarius. Water Bearers are deep-thinking intellectuals, unafraid of exploring outlandish ideas. Their strong sense of community makes them good friends and valuable team members.

Lois M.	1/1
Rod. W	1/2
Harold V.	1/8
Bob S.	1/10
Joyce L.	1/21
Verbena B.	1/23
Jackie D.	1/31
Joe S.	1/31



Bye-Bye to Dry

The cold, dry winter air can wreak havoc on sensitive skin and cause chronic dryness. Luckily, January 8 is Winter Skin Relief Day, a day to take some small steps to ease the discomfort of dry skin. Skin lotions and moisturizers are helpful, but dermatologists also recommend taking shorter showers. This may be the number one cause of dry skin. A long, hot shower strips the skin of its natural oils, degrading our best barrier against cold, dry air. Dermatologist Joshua Zeichner recommends showers less than 10 minutes and no hotter than 84 degrees. Many common cleansers and soaps are alkaline, and washing often disrupts the natural acidic pH of our skin. Look for soaps that are pH balanced. These will have a less deleterious effect on the skin. Moisturizer is key. Applying a thick and oily cream while the skin is still damp will improve absorption, but don’t apply too much. Dr. Zeichner explains that constant moisturizing may tell the skin that it doesn’t need to maintain its own hydration. These small changes to your routine may ease some uncomfortable symptoms of dry skin.



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New Year, Lasting Traditions

Another new year begins, and all around the world people will be popping champagne, singing “Auld Lang Syne,” and kissing loved ones at the stroke of midnight. But just why, exactly, do we repeat these New Year’s traditions year after year?

Bubbly champagne is the drink of choice on New Year’s. Its invention is often credited to Dom Perignon, the Benedictine monk who oversaw the wine cellars of his abbey in the year 1697. While others saw bubbles as a problematic sign that wine had spoiled, Perignon perfected the production of this new fermented drink known as champagne. From its beginnings in the abbey cellar, champagne was regularly used in religious celebrations such as consecrations and coronations. It then made the natural transition to secular celebrations, most notably at the soirees of the French aristocracy. As champagne became cheaper and more accessible, it became the classiest beverage to offer during the holidays.

Scotland’s national poet Robert Burns penned the words to “Auld Lang Syne” in 1788 and sent them to the Scots Musical Museum, requesting that his lyrics be set to an old Scottish folk tune. The phrase *auld lang syne* roughly translates to “for old times’ sake,” and, fittingly, the nostalgic song is about preserving friendships. The tune was often sung at funerals, farewells, and other group celebrations. It finally made it to America in 1929, when the Guy Lombardo Orchestra played it at a New Year’s celebration in New York’s Roosevelt Hotel.

No New Year’s party is complete without a kiss at the stroke of midnight. In ancient times, the winter darkness was the domain of evil spirits. At New Year’s masquerade balls, scary masks were torn off at midnight, and a kiss was shared as an act of purification to chase away malign spirits. For centuries, New Year’s has been a time of celebration, nostalgia, and hope.

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Sales Director

Laura Clark
Wellness Director

Danielle Tuck
Business Office Manager

Lisa Gilbo
Life Enrichment Director

Jessie Abney
Food Service Director

Paul Gilbo
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