

April Fool's Day

While popular in the U. S. , the April Fool' s Day tradition is even more prevalent¹⁾ in European countries, such as France and Great Britain. Although the roots of the traditional trickings are unclear, the French and the British both have claims on the origin of the celebration.

One theory holds that the first April Fool's Day was on April 1 of the year when King of France instituted the new calendar. This new system placed the day that had formerly been the first day of a new year on April 1 . Many people were reluctant²⁾ to adjust to the new calendar and continued to celebrate New Year's Day on what had become the first day of April. Thus, they become the first April fools. Others began to give gag³⁾ gifts on the day to mock the foolishness of those who continued to celebrate the new year on April 1 .

An English story about the day, however, holds that it began sometime during the 1200s. At the time, King John of England was in the habit of making a road out of nearly every path he walked regularly. The citizens of one particular farm village were aware of this. To avoid having their green meadows and pastures disturbed with one of the king' s roads , they built a fence that prevented the king from walking through their countryside. The king sent a group of messengers⁴⁾ to inform the villagers that they must remove the barrier. Upon hearing that the king was planning to do this, however, the villagers developed a plan of their own. When the messengers arrived, they found what appeared to be a community of lunatics⁵⁾, with people behaving in a bizarre⁶⁾ manner, throwing things and running around wildly. The messengers, alarmed at what they had found, reported to King John that these people were so mad as to be beyond punishment. So, the villagers saved their farmland by tricking the King. In Great Britain, tradition only allows April Fool's tricks from midnight to noon on April 1 . Those who try to play tricks in the afternoon become the fools themselves.

愚人节

愚人节的习俗在美国是很流行的，在欧洲国家如法国和英国就更是如此了。虽然这种愚弄人习俗的起源不甚清楚，但法国人和英国人却都声称这种庆祝活动是由他们开始的。

有一种说法是，第一个愚人节始于法国新历法实行那年的4月1日，在这一天法国国王宣布实行新历法。这种新历法将过去的新的一年第一天定在4月1日。很多人却不愿意按新的历法行事，还继续在根据新的历法已经是4月的第一天庆祝新年，于是他们就成了第一批愚人。另一些人开始在这一天送恶作剧的礼物来取笑那些继续在4月1日庆祝新年的人。

关于这一天，英国的一个故事则说它是始于13世纪的某一天。那时，英格兰的约翰国王习惯于将他经常走的几乎每一条小道都修成一条路。有一个乡村的居民知道了这个情况。为了保护他们绿色的草地和牧场免受国王修路所将造成的破坏，他们修了一道篱笆来阻挡国王在他们的乡间穿行。国王派了一队使者去通报村民们必须拆除障碍。在听到国王打算这么做时，村民们也想出了自己的办法。当使者到达时，他们看到这儿的人像一群疯子似的，样子怪诞，乱扔东西，四下疯跑。使者们惊讶于他们所看到的情景，向约翰国王报告说，这些人疯得厉害根本没法处罚。村民们就这样骗过了国王，保护了自己的农田。在英国，按习俗

学英语，练听力，上听力课堂！

在4月1日只允许从半夜到中午的这段时间可以搞愚人的恶作剧，到下午还这么做的人自己就成了愚人了。

NOTE 注释：

prevalent ['prevələnt] adj. 普遍的，流行的

reluctant [ri'lʌktənt] adj. 不愿的，勉强的

gag [gæg] n. 恶作剧

messenger ['mesɪndʒə] n. 报信者，使者

lunatic ['lju:nətɪk] n. 疯子，狂人，大傻瓜

bizarre [bi'zɑ:] adj. 奇异的