Interesting facts about Leap year

One year lasts for 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds. These additional 5 hours, for which people don’t often talk about, are in fact the reason for every fourth year to be a leap year.

# **Leap year or “leap second”**

The aim of the leap year is to help the adjustment of the Gregorian calendar to the astronomical one and to allow some of the events, such as the spring equinox, to happen at the same time. However, even the additional day in February every four years, cannot insure total consonance and because of this the scientists sometimes call on the “leap second”. The leap second in fact allows addition of one second in order to accommodate the difference between the precise time, which we measure with hours with atomic clocks and the imprecise solar time, which varies due to the irregularities and long-term slow-down in the Earth rotation.

**The first leap year**

Julius Caesar introduced the first leap year in 46 BC in his calendar and there was only one rule: every fourth year was a leap year. This allowed for many leap years. Later Pope Gregory XIII created his Gregorian calendar more than 1.500 years later.

**How can we know which year is a leap year?**

If the last two digits of the year can be divided by four (for example: 2016, 2020, 2024..), that it’s a leap year. The years that mark the end of a century are exempted from this rule. They need to be divided by four thousand in order to be considered leap years. This is why 2000 and 2400 are leap years, but 2100 is not.

**The movie “Leap Year”**

Amy Adams as Brady and Adam Scott as Jeremy are the lead actors in the movie “Leap Year” which came out in 2010. In the movie, Brady plans to travel to Dublin, Ireland in order to propose marriage to her boyfriend Jeremy on leap day, because according to Irish tradition if a man gets a marriage proposal on this day, he must accept it.

**People born on 29th February**

Around 4 million people in the world are born on the last day of February during leap year. Usually they celebrate their birthday on 28th February or 1st March. The chances of a baby to be born on 29th February are 1:1.500, which is equivalent to 0,0689%. Famous people who are born on 29th February are: Mel Gibson, Sandra Bullock, Christina Aguilera, Scarlett Johansson, actor James Mitchell, Bulgarian actor Hristo Cheshmedzhiev and many others.

**Believes about 29th February**

* For people born on 29th February

It’s believed that people born on this day are very creative, different from others and they have a developed sixth sense. However there are opposite believes as well, that bad luck would follow them throughout their life. That is why, many parents decide to write the birthday of their children on the previous or the following day.

* Proposing marriage

According to the tradition, it’s believed that women can propose marriage to men on 29th February. This believe is connected with different historical people, including St.Briged (the Irish patron saint) who complained to St.Patrick that women need to wait too long for their suitors to propose marriage. For this purpose, St.Patrick gave this day to women when they can propose marriage to men (source [BBC](https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17203353))

Another believe is the queen Margaret from Scotland (she was only 5 years old at the time) introduces sanctions for men if they refuse marriage proposal from women during leap year (the compensation for marriage refusal was: a pair of leather gloves, one rose, one pound and a kiss).

There are other traditions for the price of “No”. If a man refuses a marriage proposal during leap year, it will cost him. In Denmark, if a man refuses a marriage propasal from a woman on 29th February, he must give her a dozen of pairs of gloves (source [The Mirror](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/16-leap-year-facts-2016-7104207)). In Finland, the uninterested man must give the woman who proposed marriage enough material for her to make herself a skirt.

On the other hand, in Greece, proposing marriage on 29th February is considered bad luck. Couples in Greece avoid proposing marriage on this day by any cost (source [The Telegraph](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/howaboutthat/9113311/Top-20-craziest-facts-about-leap-years.html)).

Leap year capitol city

The town Anthony, which is located on the border between Texas and New Mexico, is a safe-proclaimed [leap year capitol city](https://www.leapyearday.com/leap-year-capital-of-the-world). Every fourth year there is a big festival and birthday celebration for all people born on 29th February.

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Photos: internet

*The original article is published in the school online digital newspaper IN-formator on the following link*

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