

Remembrance Day

11th November

What is Remembrance Day?

Remembrance Day, also known as Armistice Day, commemorates the end of World War One when an agreement to stop fighting was reached on the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month in 1918. The truce is called the Armistice.

It is now held to remember all those who have died in wars and is marked by a two-minute silence at 11:00am every 11th November. It is also an opportunity for people to learn from history and to think about the importance of peace.

What happens on Remembrance Day?

After World War One, many people felt it was wrong to celebrate at the end of the war because so many had died. When the church bells struck 11 o'clock on 11 November 1919, one year after the war, people all over the country bowed their heads; buses and trains stopped moving; shopkeepers stopped serving; and the electricity was cut off to stop trams from running.

By tradition, a two-minute period of silence is observed throughout the country at 11 am, and church services and other ceremonial gatherings take place during the day. A nationally televised remembrance service, generally attended by politicians, religious leaders, military personnel, and members of the British royal family, has been held for decades at the Cenotaph monument in central London.



What is Remembrance?

Remembrance honours those who serve to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life.

We unite across faiths, cultures and backgrounds to remember the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces community from United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. We will remember them.

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We pay tribute to the special contribution of families and of the emergency services.

We acknowledge innocent civilians who have lost their lives in conflict and acts of terrorism.

Poppies

The most recognizable symbol of Remembrance Sunday is the red poppy, which became associated with World War I memorials after scores of the flowers bloomed in the former battlefields of Belgium and northern France. (The phenomenon was depicted in the popular 1915 poem “In Flanders Fields,” by Canadian soldier John McCrae.) In 1921 the newly formed British Legion (now the Royal British Legion), a charitable organization for veterans, began selling red paper poppies for Armistice Day, and its annual Poppy Appeal has been enormously successful since.

In addition to poppies intended to be worn on clothing, wreaths made of poppies are frequently displayed at memorial sites.

“We shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Fields”.





In Flanders Fields

by John McCrae

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' Fields.



LEST WE FORGET



5 Facts about Remembrance



1. Remembrance Sunday always falls on the second Sunday of November

The first Sunday closest to the 11th of November is chosen every year as the day to remember the fallen and injured. As Sunday is often a day of rest, many British nationals and residents of the Commonwealth will use the day to attend a local remembrance parade, honour a two-minute silence at 11AM or watch the London parade on TV.

2. 11th November symbolises The Armistice

The Armistice was an agreement between The Allies and Germany to end the fighting of WW1. As a result, soldiers stopped fighting at 11am on 11th November in 1918, starting the end of the four year-long war.



3. Poppies are associated with Remembrance Day



As a result of fierce fighting and bombing during WW1, landscapes were turned to ruin. However, resilient poppy flowers flourished – creating bright red fields, which many symbolise as a remembrance of the blood spilled on the battlefields.

The fields of poppies also provided inspiration to the Canadian soldier and poet; John McCrae who wrote the incredibly well-known poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

As far back as 1921, just three years' after the end of WW1, artificial red poppies were sold in the United Kingdom to raise money in support of ex-servicemen and the families of fallen soldiers.

4. Over 1.2 million British soldiers have lost their lives since the start of WW1

It's estimated that approximately over 880,000 British servicemen lost their lives during WW1, over 380,000 during WW2 and over 7,000 since WW2 in military operations including the Falklands, Afghanistan and Iraq.



5. Remembrance Day isn't just to remember the fallen of WW1

Remembrance Day was originally created after WW1 to remember the fallen soldiers of WW1, their families and support servicemen injured as a result of warfare.

27 years after WW1, saw the start of WW2 and since the end of WW2, the UK Armed Forces have been deployed over 80 times for combat missions.

As a result, Remembrance Day is now also a time to remember all of the servicemen and women who have lost their lives as a result of war, been severely injured – resulting in life-changing injuries and commemorating those who have served for our country. Remembrance Day also has a personal meaning to all veterans and military personnel currently serving.

