

**Is there a special day for jokes and tricks in your country? Do you like playing tricks on people? If you're ever in the UK on 1 April, you'd better watch out!**

### When and what is April Fool's Day?

April Fool's Day is on 1 April. It's the custom in the UK to play a trick or a joke on someone on this day. If the person falls for the joke, then they are called an 'April Fool'. In fact, it's only half a day because April Fool's Day finishes at midday. No more jokes after lunchtime, please!

### What kind of tricks do people play?

Here are some April Fool's tricks from around the world:

- In the 1990s Burger King published an advert in the magazine *USA Today* offering new 'Left-handed Whoppers' (hamburgers) for the 32 million left-handed Americans! Thousands of customers ordered the new burger in the restaurants.
- A zoo in Japan said that they had a giant penguin that was 165cm tall and weighed 80kg! In fact, it was a man dressed up in a penguin suit.
- One year in the UK a children's news programme said that scientists had invented a 'Brain Band'. It was a coloured head band that you put on your head and it helped to make you more intelligent! In an on-line poll, 47 per cent of the children who heard the news wanted to buy a 'brain band'!
- In 1949 a radio presenter in New Zealand told listeners that there were millions of wasps coming to invade. He told viewers to wear their socks over their trousers and to put honey on their doors. Millions of listeners believed him!
- In 1976 a very famous British astronomer told radio listeners that at 9.47 a.m. the earth was going to experience a feeling of less gravity. He said that Jupiter and Pluto would cross and if listeners jumped in the air at exactly 9.47 a.m. they would feel the sensation of having no gravity! Hundreds of listeners phoned the radio to say they had jumped and floated in the air!
- Ikea announced that the shop had launched a dog highchair (highchairs are usually for babies!) named 'HUNDSTOL' (Swedish for dog chair). Google 'IKEA dog high chair' for more details.
- The free London newspaper, *Metro*, came up with a novel idea to deal with the problem of litter on the underground (unfortunately it was only a joke). They said that the newspaper was now edible – 'the only paper that you can eat after reading'.
- A British newspaper announced that Portugal had 'sold' Cristiano Ronaldo, the footballer, to Spain for €160 million. Why? To try to clear its national debt. It was a joke, of course.

### Do people actually like April Fool's Day?

We asked some Brits this question. This is what they said:

'I love April Fool's Day. It can be really good fun. I love playing tricks on people and I don't mind if people play tricks on me. It's one day of the year you can be really silly and have a laugh and it's OK. You have to be quite sensible for the other 364 days of the year, so I look forward to 1 April.'

**Malisa**

'I don't like April Fool's Day. It makes me a bit nervous. I keep thinking someone is about to play a trick on me. When 12 o'clock passes I feel quite relieved that it's finished for another year!'

**Johnny**

'When I was at school, April Fool's Day was always good fun. We played tricks on each other and sometimes on the teacher. In fact, one year one of the boys at school put a bucket of water on top of the door and when the chemistry teacher came in, he got very wet! It was funny, but the boy got in big trouble!'

**Phil**

'April Fool's Day is a great idea. It's easy to forget the actual date and I always believe everything I read in the newspapers or watch on the TV news. I usually believe the big national hoaxes and it always makes me laugh afterwards. It's good to remind us that maybe we shouldn't always believe everything we hear in the news.'

**Louise**

'April Fool's Day is fun when you're young. I remember putting a plastic fried egg on my dad's plate for breakfast as a trick. He decided to cut it up and pretend to eat it! Now I think some of the tricks are a bit silly and people can be a bit cruel playing tricks on their "friends"!'

**Clare**

'I hate April Fool's Day. Last year people at work changed the sugar for salt so we all put salt in our coffee! Then some joker in the office decided he wanted a day off and he did something to the computers so they wouldn't work. It just wasn't funny! I had lots to do and we all had to stop working and solve the problem.'

**Mark**

So watch out this year on 1 April!