

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS CALENDAR FOR SCHOOLS 2011-2012

Source: Interfaith Calendar,
BBC, Religion & Ethics Newsweekly

For information about how the holidays are observed and how this might impact schools, see [An Educator's Classroom Guide to America's Religious Beliefs and Practices](#) by Benjamin Hubbard, John T. Hatfield, and Jams A. Santucci. The specific dates of some holidays, especially those of the Sikh faith, varied widely based on source and calendar tradition used to figure them. In those cases, administrators may choose to consult the religious leaders in the community before setting school calendars. For a more detailed description and definition of the holidays listed here, and for the dates for religious holidays not listed, please see <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/index.htm>.

This calendar has been developed to assist schools in setting their academic calendars with regard to the religious needs of the families, students, and faculty they serve. Only some religious observances are listed, based on those religious communities most represented in the schools. When using the calendar, please keep the following in mind: some religious observances begin at sundown of the previous day; holidays calculated on the lunar calendar change each year on the Western calendar. Many holidays are celebrated on different days in different countries, so the days that students or employees choose to observe a particular holiday may vary. Employees may not adhere to a major world religion, or any of the holidays listed below, but may legally observe other religious holidays important to them with equal treatment in the workplace. You may download this calendar at the California Three Rs Project site <http://ca3rsproject.org/pages/calendar.html>

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AUGUST 2011

- 1 Fast in honor of Holy Mother of Lord Jesus - **Orthodox Christian** (fast)
Ramadan begins * ** - **Islam** (month-long fast during daylight hours)
- 2 Lughnassad - Imbolc * - **Wicca/Pagan** (festival)
Lammas – **Christian**
- 9 Tisha B'Av * - **Jewish** (fast)
- 13 Raksha Bandhan ** - **Hindu** (festival)
- 13-15 Obon ** - **Shinto** (festival)
- 15 Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary - **Catholic Christian**
Dormition of the Theotokos - **Orthodox Christian**
- 22 Krisha Janmashtami ** - **Hindu** (nightlong prayers)
- 26 Lailat al Qadr * ** - **Islam** (prayers)
- 31-September 2
Eid al Fitr * ** - **Islam** (end of Ramadan – major holiday)

SEPTEMBER 2011

- 1 Ganesha Chaturthi ** - **Hindu** (festival)
Ecclesiastical New Year - **Orthodox Christian**

- 2-10 Paryushana Parva - **Jain** (important 8-day festival)
- 8 Nativity of Mary - **Christian**
- 23 Equinox
 - Mabon * - **Wicca/Pagan** northern hemisphere (festival)
 - Ostara * - **Wicca/Pagan** southern hemisphere
- 28-Oct 5
 - Navaratri ** - **Hindu** (festival)
- 29-30 Rosh Hashanah (New Year) * - **Jewish** (major holiday – no work)

OCTOBER 2011

- 4 St Francis Day - **Catholic Christian**
- 5 Waqf al Arafa - Hajj Day * ** - **Islam** (prayers)
- 6 Dussehra - **Hindu** (prayers)
- 8 Yom Kippur * - **Jewish** (major holiday – fasting, no work)
- 13-19 Sukkot * - **Jewish** (13-14 Primary Obligation Days)
- 20 Birth of the Báb * - **Baha'i** (work restrictions)
Installation of Scriptures as Guru Granth - **Sikh**
- 21 Simchat Torah * - **Jewish**
- 25-28 Deepavali ** **Hindu** (major festival)
- 26 Diwali ** - **Jain - Hindu - Sikh** (major festival)
- 30 Reformation Day ** - **Protestant Christian**
- 31 All Hallows Eve - **Christian** (prayers and merriment)

NOVEMBER 2011

- 1 All Saints' Day - **Christian** (special day of obligation)
Samhain - Beltane * - **Wicca/Pagan** Northern and southern hemispheres
- 2 All Souls' Day - **Catholic Christian** (prayers)
Day of the Dead or El Dia de los Muertos – **Hispanic Catholic Christian, Traditional**
- 4-7 Hajj * - **Islam** (pilgrimage to Mecca)
- 6-9 Eid al Adha * ** - **Islam** (feast)
- 10 Guru Nanak Dev Sahib birthday - **Sikh** (major holiday)
- 12 Birth of Baha'u'llah * - **Baha'i** (work restrictions)
- 15 Nativity Fast begins through Dec. 24 - **Orthodox Christian** (fast)
- 24 Thanksgiving - **Interfaith**
Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom – **Sikh**
- 26 Day of Covenant * - **Baha'i**
Hijra - New Year * ** - **Islam**
- 27 First Sunday of Advent - **Christian**

DECEMBER 2011

- 5 Ashura * ** - **Islam** (fast)
- 8 Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) ** - **Buddhism**
Immaculate Conception - **Catholic Christian**
- 12 Feast day - Our Lady of Guadalupe - **Catholic Christian**
- 16 Posadas Navidenas through Dec. 25 – **Christian**
- 21-28 Hanukkah * - **Jewish**
- 22 Solstice
Yule - **Christian**
Yule * - **Wicca/Pagan** northern hemisphere
Litha * - **Wicca/Pagan** southern hemisphere
- 23 Human Light – **Secular**
- 24 Christmas Eve – **Christian**
- 25 Christmas * - **Christian** (celebration)
Feast of the Nativity - **Orthodox Christian**
- 26 Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra) ** - **Zoroastrian**
- 26– Jan 1
Kwanza – **Interfaith**
- 30 Feast of the Holy Family - **Catholic Christian** (prayers)
- 31 Watch Night - **Christian** (prayers)

JANUARY 2012

- 1 Feast of St Basil - **Orthodox Christian**
Gantan-sai (New Years) - **Shinto** (major festival)
- 5 Twelfth Night - **Christian**
Guru Gobindh Singh birthday – **Sikh**
- 6 Epiphany – **Western Christian**
Dia de los Reyes (3 Kings Day) - **Hispanic Christians**
Nativity of Christ (Christmas) - **Armenian Orthodox** (major holiday)
- 7 Feast of the Nativity (Christmas) ** - **Orthodox Christian** (major holiday)
- 9-12 Mahayana New Year ** - **Buddhist**
- 13 Maghi – **Sikh**
- 15 World Religion Day * - **Baha'i**
- 17 Blessing of the Animals - **Hispanic Catholic Christian**
- 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - **Christian**
- 23 Chinese New Year - **Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist** (15-day festival, major holiday)

FEBRUARY 2012

- 2 Imbolc - Lughnassad * - **Wicca/Pagan** Northern and southern hemispheres
- 3 Maha Shavartri ** - **Hindu** (festival and prayers)

- Setsubun-sai – **Shinto** (major holiday)
- 4 Mawlid an Nabi (Prophet Muhammad’s birthday)* - **Islam** (not universally observed)
- 8 Tu B'Shvat * - **Judaism** (feast of native foods of Israel)
- 14 Saint Valentines Day – **Christian**
- 15 Nirvana Day ** - **Buddhist - Jain**
- 21 Shrove Tuesday – **Christian**
- 22 Ash Wednesday - Lent begins- **Christian**

MARCH 2012

- 2 - 20 Nineteen Day Fast * - **Baha'I** (no food or water daylight hours)
- 4 Orthodox Sunday - **Orthodox Christian**
- 8 Purim * - **Judaism** (merrymaking, charity)
Magha Puja Day ** - **Buddhist**
Holi ** - **Hindu** (major holiday)
- 9 Hola Mohalla – **Sikh** (mock battles)
- 17 St Patrick's Day - **Christian**
- 20 Equinox
Ostara * - **Wicca/Pagan** northern hemisphere
Mabon * - **Wicca/Pagan** southern hemisphere
- 21 Naw Ruz (New Year) * - **Baha'i**
Norouz (New Year) - **Persian/Zoroastrian**
- 23 New Year ** - **Hindu**
Prophet Zarathustra birth – **Zoroastrian**
- 25 Annunciation of Virgin Mary – Catholic Christian
- 28 Khordad Sal (Birth of Prophet Zaranhushtra) ** - **Zoroastrian**

APRIL 2012

- 1 Palm Sunday - **Christian**
Ramanavami – **Hindu** (temple visits, story telling)
- 5 Maundy Thursday - **Christian**
- 6-9 Theravadin New Year ** - **Buddhist**
- 6 Good Friday - **Christian** (major holiday)
Lord's Evening Meal - **Jehovah's Witness Christians**
Hanuman Jayanti - **Hindu**
Mahavir Jayanti ** - **Jain** (major holiday)
- 7-14 Pesach (Passover) * - **Judaism** (work restrictions on first day and last 2 days, major holiday)
- 8 Easter - **Christian** (major holiday)
Palm Sunday - **Orthodox Christian**
- 13 Holy Friday - **Orthodox Christian**
- 14 Baisakhi New Year – **Sikh** (founding of Sikh brotherhood, major holiday)

- 15 Easter/Pascha - **Orthodox Christian** (major holiday)
- 19 Yom HaShoah * - **Judaism**
- 21 First Day of Ridvan * - **Baha'i** (no work)
- 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan * - **Baha'i** (no work)

May 2012

- 1 Palm Sunday - **Orthodox Christian**
Beltane - Samhain - **Wicca/Pagan** Northern and Southern hemispheres
- 2 Twelfth Day of Ridvan * - **Baha'i** (work restrictions)
- 3 National Day of Prayer - **Interfaith USA**
- 6 Visakha Puja - Buddha Day ** - **Buddhist** (major holiday)
- 10 Lag B'Omer * - **Jewish**
- 17 Ascension Day - **Christian**
- 23 Declaration of the Bab * - **Baha'i** (work restrictions)
- 24 All Ascension of Jesus - **Orthodox Christian**
- 26 Pentecost - **Christian** (baptisms and confirmations)
- 27-28 Shavuot * - **Jewish** (feast)
- 29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah * - **Baha'i** (work restrictions)

JUNE 2012

- 3 Pentecost - **Orthodox Christian** (baptism and confirmations)
- 10 All Saints - **Orthodox Christian** (prayers)
- 16 Lailat al Miraj * ** - **Islam**
Guru Arjan Dev martyrdom - **Sikh**
- 20 Solstice
Litha * - **Wicca/Pagan** northern hemisphere
Yule * - **Wicca/Pagan** southern hemisphere
- 29 Saints Peter and Paul - **Christian** (feast)

JULY 2012

- 3 Asalha Puja Day ** - **Buddhist**
- 4 Lailat at Bara'ah * ** - **Islam** (all night prayers)
- 9 Martyrdom of the Bab * - **Baha'i** (work restrictions)
- 13-16 Obon ** - **Buddhist - Shinto** (festival, honor ancestors)
- 20 Ramadan Begins * ** - **Islam** (month long fast in daylight hours)
- 23 Emperor Haile Selassi I birthday – **Rastafari**
- 24 Pioneer Day - **Mormon Christian** (parades, community activities)
- 29 Tisha B'Av * - **Judaism** (fast)