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Easter (n.)

Old English *Easterdæg*, "Easter day," from *Eastre* (Northumbrian *Eostre*), from Proto-Germanic **austron-*, "dawn," also possibly the name of a goddess whose feast was celebrated in *Eastermonað* (the Anglo-Saxon month corresponding with **April**), from **aust-* "east, toward the sunrise" (compare east), from PIE root ***aus-** (1) "to shine," especially of the dawn.

Bede writes that Anglo-Saxon Christians adopted her name for their Mass of Christ's resurrection. Almost all neighboring languages use a variant of Latin *Pascha* to name this holiday (see **paschal**).

Easter egg is attested by 1825, earlier *pace egg* (1610s). **Easter bunny** is attested by 1904 in children's lessons; *Easter rabbit* is by 1888; the paganish customs of Easter seem to have grown popular c. 1900; before that they were limited to German immigrants.

If the children have no garden, they make nests in the wood-shed, barn, or house. They gather colored flowers for the rabbit to eat, that it may lay colored eggs. If there be a garden, the eggs are hidden singly in the green grass, box-wood, or elsewhere. On Easter Sunday morning they whistle for the rabbit, and the children imagine that they see him jump the fence. After church, on Easter Sunday morning, they hunt the eggs, and in the afternoon the boys go out in the meadows and crack eggs or play with them like marbles. Or sometimes children are invited to a neighbor's to hunt eggs. [Phebe Earle Gibbons, "Pennsylvania Dutch," Philadelphia, 1882]

‘cite’



*aus-

PIE

to shine



*aust-

Proto-Germanic

east, toward the sunrise



*austron-

Proto-Germanic

dawn



Eastre

Old English

the Church festival of Easter



Easter

Middle English



Easter (n.)

Entries linking to *Easter*

April ➤

fourth month, c. 1300, *aueril*, from Old French *avril* (11c.), from Latin (*mensis*) *Aprilis*, second month of the ancient Roman calendar, from a stem of uncertain origin and meaning, with month-name suffix *-ilis* as in *Quintilis*, *Sextilis* (the old names of July and August).

Perhaps based on *Apru*, an Etruscan borrowing of Greek **Aphrodite**. Or perhaps **ap(e)rilis* "the following, the next," from its place as the second month of the old Roman calendar, from Proto-Italic **ap(e)ro-*, from PIE **apo-* "away, off" (see **apo-**; compare Sanskrit *aparah* "second," Gothic *afar* "after"). Old folk etymology connected it with Latin *aperire* "to open."

The name was in English in Latin form from mid-12c.; it replaced Old English *Eastermonað*, which was named for a fertility goddess (see **Easter**). It was re-spelled in Middle English on the Latin model (as *apprile*, a form first attested late 14c.).

paschal (adj.) ➤

"of or pertaining to Passover or Easter," early 15c., from Old French *paschal* (12c.) and directly from Late Latin *paschalis*, from *pascha* "Passover, Easter," from Greek *pascha* "Passover," from Aramaic (Semitic) *pasha* "pass over," corresponding to Hebrew *pesah*, from *pasah* "he passed over" (see **Passover**). *Pasche* was an early Middle English term for "Easter" (see **Easter**), and the older Dutch form of the word, *Paas*, was retained in New York.

*aus- (1) ➤

Proto-Indo-European root meaning "to shine," especially of the dawn. It forms all or part of: **austral**; **Australia**; **Austria**; **Austro-**; **Aurora**; **east**; **Easter**; **eastern**; **eo-**; **Ostrogoth**.

It is the hypothetical source of/evidence for its existence is provided by: Sanskrit *usah* "dawn;" Greek *ēōs* "dawn;" Latin *Aurora* "goddess of dawn," *auster* "south wind;" Lithuanian *aušra* "dawn;" Old English *east* "east."

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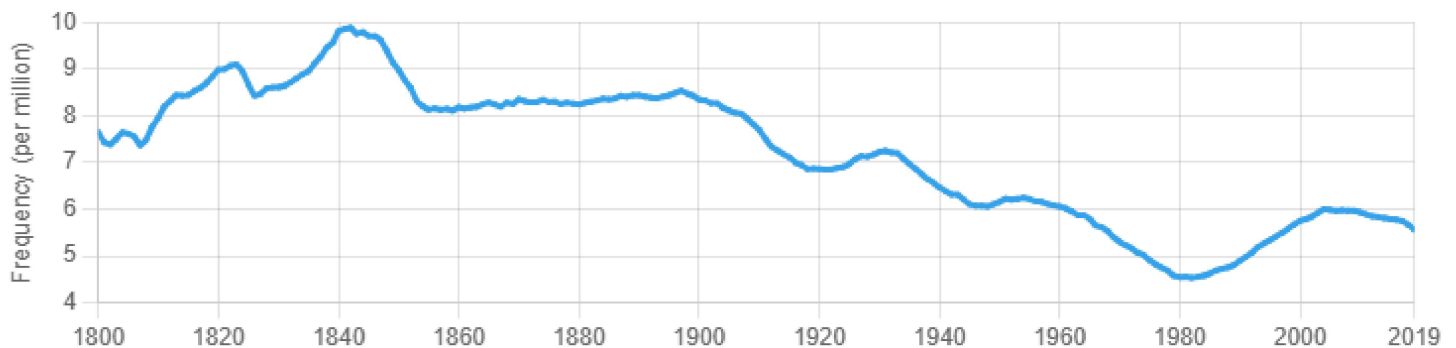


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"period between Ash Wednesday and Easter," late 14c., short for Lenten (n.)..."the forty days of fasting before Easter" in the Christian calendar (early 12c.), from Old English lencten...

Florida



U.S. state, formerly a Spanish colony, probably from Spanish Pascua florida, literally "flowering Easter," a Spanish name...

Thursday before Easter, mid-15c., from Middle English maunde "the Last Supper" (c. 1300), also "ceremony of washing the feet..."

palm



in the local languages (such as Old Saxon palma, Old High German palma, Old Norse palmr); Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter...

austral



aurion "tomorrow;" Lithuanian aušra "dawn;" Old Church Slavonic jutro "dawn, morning; tomorrow;" Old High German ostara "Easter..."

Monday



Black Monday (late 14c.) is the Monday after Easter day, though how it got its reputation for bad luck is a mystery (none...

wind



"air in motion," Old English wind "wind," from Proto-Germanic *winda- (source also of Old Saxon, Old Frisian, Middle Dutch, Dutch wind, Old Norse vindr, Old High German wind,...

egg



"the body formed in the females of all animals (with the exception of a few of the lowest type) in which by impregnation the development of the fetus takes place," mid-14c., egge, mostly i...

pace



late 13c., "a step in walking," also "rate of motion; the space traveled by the foot in one completed movement in walking," from Old French pas "a step, pace, trace," and directly fro...

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