

Did you know that there's a World Emoji Day? Well, there is ... and it's on 17 July. 🙄

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

- a thermometer
- to vomit
- dizzy
- inclusive
- diverse
- to represent
- a disability
- a launch

Definition

- a. the feeling that your head is spinning
- b. the thing you use to measure temperature
- c. makes everyone feel included
- d. to show what something looks like
- e. the first day customers can buy or use a product
- f. a physical or mental condition that makes some things more difficult to do
- g. has a lot of variety
- h. when the food you've eaten comes back out of your stomach and out of your mouth because you're ill

World Emoji Day

Emoji is the fastest growing language in history. Five billion emojis are sent every day, just on Facebook Messenger. They're appearing in some surprising places too. One court judge in England used a smiley face emoji 😊 in a document to make it easy to explain the court's decision to children. It's not surprising that there's a day to celebrate emojis, but what do you know about its organisers, the website Emojipedia?

Know your emoji

The company Unicode actually creates the computer code that give us emojis, but Emojipedia is where you can learn exactly what each emoji means and how to use it. Most of us probably know and use the most popular emojis, like the classic smiley face, heart or the smiling face with tears of laughter. But if you want to grow your emoji vocabulary, you can use Emojipedia to find out new ways to speak emoji.

So, for example, go to Emojipedia and type in *sick* and it will give you several options. If you mean *ill*, as in the American English phrase *I'm sick*, you can use the face with a thermometer or a mask. Or maybe you mean *I feel sick*, like in British English to mean *to vomit*. Since 2017, when Unicode added the vomiting emoji, you can choose from two green faces. Or maybe

you're just feeling a bit dizzy, in which case you can choose the confused, dizzy-looking face. If you wanted to talk about hospital or a medical condition, Emojipedia has also suggested a syringe or a pill. So you can see with just one real word, *sick*, you have a lot of emojis to choose from to explain exactly what you mean!

New, inclusive emojis

Unicode adds new emojis all the time. They might take time to be available on all platforms and phones, but you will see them immediately on Emojipedia. An important improvement to the emoji list, which had 2,823 emojis after its 2018 update, is to make the emojis more diverse. Since 2015, when Apple added five different emoji skin colours, people have been able to choose how to represent themselves best. The 2018 update added red hair, Afro hair and a bald face, all in a range of skin colours, but that update didn't go far enough either. Many people asked for new emojis to represent deaf and blind people, and people with physical or invisible disabilities.

Save the date!

There's some emoji history behind how Emojipedia chose 17 July to celebrate World Emoji Day. Check out the calendar emoji on Emojipedia and look carefully. Can you see the date?

The code for each emoji is the same, but different platforms, like Twitter or Facebook, for example, design their emojis in different ways. When Emojipedia was deciding which day to hold World Emoji Day, only Apple was using a calendar emoji with a date on, 17 July. So they decided to celebrate emojis on 17 July too. Apple chose that date because it was when Apple introduced its iCal calendar feature for Mac in 2002. Now, other platforms have added dates to their calendar emojis. Facebook Messenger uses its launch date of 9 August. Twitter's calendar emoji shows 21 March because that's the date Twitter created its company. It used to show Twitter's launch date, which was 15 July, but that was too close to World Emoji Day's date, so they changed it.

Happy World Emoji Day!

So, if you want to send someone a message using emoji to celebrate World Emoji day, Emojipedia has plenty to choose from, including six colours of raising hand emojis, five party emojis and two kinds of fireworks. You can even choose a world globe that shows the part of the world you live in. Whichever emojis you choose to celebrate, we wish you Happy World Emoji Day! 😊

Tasks

Task 1

Match the descriptions (a–e) with the dates (1–5).

Dates

1. 21 March
2. 17 July
3. 2015
4. 2017
5. 2018

Definition

- a. the date on the first calendar emoji to show an actual month and day
- b. when you could first send a vomiting emoji
- c. when you could first send an emoji face with no hair
- d. the date on Twitter's calendar emoji
- e. when you could first send emojis with different skin colours

Task 2

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. People send five billion emojis every day on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.	True	False
2. Emojis nowadays are used only for writing between friends.	True	False
3. Emojipedia writes the computer codes that make emojis.	True	False
4. When Americans say 'I'm sick' they mean 'I don't feel well.'	True	False
5. Apple was the first platform to give users a choice of skin colours for their emojis.	True	False
6. The choice of emojis is as diverse as it needs to be.	True	False
7. Emojis look the same on every device and platform.	True	False
8. Twitter started celebrating World Emoji Day on 15 July.	True	False

Discussion

What's your favourite emoji and what do you use it for?

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. h
3. a
4. c
5. g
6. d
7. f
8. e

Task 1

1. d
2. a
3. e
4. b
5. c

Task 2

1. False
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. True
6. False
7. False
8. False