

MEMORIAL DAY

About Memorial Day

Memorial Day began as Decoration Day on May 30, 1868, a time set aside to honor those who gave their lives in service to our country after the Civil War. In 1971, Congress officially declared it a national holiday, observed on the last Monday of May.

For Hoosiers, this day holds deep meaning—since Indiana became the 19th state on December 11, 1816, more than **48,000 Indiana service members have laid down their lives in defense of our freedoms.**

What do we, as Americans, receive from their sacrifice? Freedom. The rights we enjoy today – the ability to speak freely, travel without restriction, and practice our beliefs – exist because of the brave men and women who served. Their sacrifice reminds us that freedom is not free; it comes at a cost, paid by those who wore the uniform and by the families they left behind.

This Memorial Day, we pause to honor, remember, and reflect on their service and the lasting impact of their sacrifice.

Honoring the True Meaning

Throughout our nation's history, **1.2 million Americans** have given their lives in service, from the Revolutionary War to today. Memorial Day is more than picnics, sales, or even racing. It is a time to reflect on the sacrifices made by our military and their families. Their courage and commitment have secured the freedoms we enjoy every day, and this day serves as a solemn reminder to honor their legacy.



Respectful Language



Memorial Day is a time of remembrance, not celebration. Instead of saying 'Happy Memorial Day' or focusing on festivities, consider using language that honors the sacrifice of fallen service members and their families. Phrases like, 'We remember and honor those who gave their lives for our country' or 'Keeping the families of our fallen heroes in our thoughts' show respect and gratitude.

Before saying 'Happy Memorial Day,' take a moment to consider how it might feel to someone who has lost a loved one in service.

National Moment of Silence



At 3:00 p.m. on Memorial Day, Americans observe a National Moment of Silence to honor fallen service members, a tradition established by the National Moment of Remembrance Act in 2000.

National Poppy Day May 24



Since World War I, poppies have become a symbol of remembrance for fallen soldiers, inspired by John McCrae's famous poem, *In Flanders Fields*.