

# THE ORIGIN OF ENGLISH DAYS OF WEEK

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**Introduction.** There are a lot of interesting facts in English history and culture about the origin of week days. In English-speaking countries, as in almost all others, adopted the seven-day week. Today the official version is the origin of the planets names . The week in some English-speaking countries starts on Sunday but why the week starts on Sunday? Actually it is not common only in England. English week starts from Sunday in America, Canada and some other countries. It is connected with religion and Jewish traditions. Interesting facts about old traditions that Sunday was placed in the beginning of the week in calendars and the first known mention of the word “week-end” were also studied.

**Aim.** To analyze and to investigate different ways of origin the names of English days of week.

**Materials and methods.** English literature and scientific sources on history and culture.

**Results and discussion.** We were able to study and to analyze the historical, cultural, religious and scientific aspects of origin the names of English days of week.

**Conclusion.** Today the official version is the origin of the names of the planets. Week starts from Sunday in America, Canada and some other countries. In fact it is connected with religion and Jewish traditions. There is an old tradition that Sunday is placed in the beginning of the week in calendars, but in everyday life Monday becomes the first day of the week but Saturday and Sunday are weekends in the end of the week.

There are several ways in which they are easier to remember. For example, assign numbers to days in both Russian and English. We denote as mono Monday - the first single, Tuesday - two - two or the second Friday - five fifth, Saturday - six - sixth, Sunday - seven - seven. However, for Wednesday and Thursday it was impossible to select numbers that will be in tune with this day for weeks. It is interesting to note that week in some English-speaking countries starts on Sunday, so there is confusion, because Monday is not the first day of the week. You can also use the words-analogues, but since everyone has their own association. Today the official version is the origin of the names of the planets. Time changed the positions of the heaven bodies, and one of the time-unit was the lunar month of approximately 29 days and includes four phases

of about 7 days each. At that time there were seven known planets, which were named from revered gods. In the English culture influenced the Romans formed these names: Monday - Moon - moon, Tuesday - Tiu - Tiu", Wednesday - Woden - One, Thursday - Thor - Thor, Friday - Freya "Freya", Saturday - Saturn - Saturn, Sunday - Sun - Sun. The first day of the week (for most ), Sunday has been set aside as the "day of the sun" since ancient Egyptian times in honor of the sun-god, beginning with Ra. The Egyptians passed their idea of a 7-day week onto the Romans, who also started their week with the Sun's day. Monday was named after the moon. In Latin, it was known as *dies lunae* (day of the moon), and this made its way into Old English. It is said that in early pagan traditions, Monday was dedicated to the goddess of the moon, although in some Christian traditions, assigning the moon to the second day also follows the story of Genesis, where in between the first and second days, darkness was separated from light and "evening came". Tuesday has always been dedicated to a war god, and in ancient Greek, it was known as "day of Ares", modified only slightly by the Roman "day of Mars", and later in old English. Wednesday was dedicated to the messenger of the gods, and for the Greeks, then to the Romans as "day of Mercury". Jupiter was awarded the fifth day by the Romans, and it was assigned to Thor by the Norse. For many the best day of the week, Friday was, fittingly, assigned to Aphrodite and Venus. In Old Norse and English, Venus was associated with Frigg, a goddess of knowledge and wisdom. The last day of the week for many, Saturday historically was dedicated to Saturn (Cronus to the Greeks), Jupiter's father and a god associated with dissolution, renewal, generation, agriculture and wealth. Notably, for some religions, Saturday, not Sunday, is celebrated as the weekly day of rest, known as the Shabbat in Judaism and Sabbath for Seventh Day Adventists.

Why the week starts on Sunday? Actually it is not common only in England. Week starts from Sunday in America, Canada and some other countries. It is connected with religion and Jewish traditions. According to the Bible, God took six days for the creation of the world. On the seventh day the Creator rested. When Christianity developed the first day of the week became the day of rest. In 321 the Roman Emperor Constantine ordered the appointment of Sunday as the first day of the week and worship. Later traditions changed. Many European countries did not share the weekend and began to consider the beginning of the week Monday. North America left the old year. It is interesting that in the UK there is no common opinion at the moment. Old tradition that Sunday is placed in the beginning of the week in calendars, but in everyday life Monday becomes the first day of the week but Saturday and Sunday are weekends in the end of the week. Interesting facts: the first known mention of the word "week-end" was seen in an 1879 edition of *Notes and Queries*, and it described being of work from Saturday afternoon through Monday morning. The first 5-day workweek (where workers had all of Saturday off) in an American factory was instituted in a New

England mill in 1908 in order to accommodate the religious practice of its Jewish workforce. By having a shorter workweek, factories were able to hire more workers, and during the Great Depression, the 5-day workweek was established in order to lessen unemployment. A few companies have experimented with a four-day, 32-hour workweek and have found that the shorter week encourages focus and results in more efficient performance. Public health officials are also in favor of a shorter workweek, as they believe it would result in mental health improvements and morale.