

## Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the U.S. Latinx and Hispanic communities. The event, which spans from September 15 to October 15, commemorates how those communities have influenced and contributed to American society at large.

The term Hispanic or Latino (or the more recent term Latinx) refers to a person's culture or origin—regardless of race. On the 2020 Census form, people were counted as Hispanic or Latino or Spanish if they could identify as having Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or "another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin."

Hispanic Heritage Month actually began as a commemorative week when it was first introduced in June of 1968 by California Congressman George E. Brown. The push to recognize the contributions of the Latinx community had gained momentum throughout the 1960s when the civil rights movement was at its peak and there was a growing awareness of the United States' multicultural identities.



Brown, who represented East Los Angeles and a large portion of the San Gabriel Valley—both heavily populated by members of the Hispanic and Latinx communities—wanted to recognize the role played by those communities throughout American history.

On September 17, 1968, Congress passed Public Law 90-48, officially authorizing and requesting the president to issue annual proclamations declaring September 15 and 16 to mark the beginning of National Hispanic Heritage Week and called upon the "people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe such week with appropriate ceremonies and activities." President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first Hispanic Heritage Week presidential proclamation the same day.

### Why the Date of Hispanic Heritage Month Is Important

The timing of Hispanic Heritage Month coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of several Latin American nations. September 15 was chosen as the kickoff because it coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of five "Central American neighbors," as Johnson called them—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Those five nations declared their independence from Spain on September 15, 1821.

In his proclamation, Johnson also acknowledged Mexico, which declared its independence from Spain on September 16, 1810. Although not mentioned specifically by Johnson, Chile also celebrates its independence during that week (September 18, 1810 from Spain) and Belize, which declared its independence from Great Britain on September 21, 1981, was subsequently added to the list of nations specifically celebrated during what is now Hispanic Heritage Month.

### Hispanic Heritage Expands From a Week to a Month

From 1968 until 1988, Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan all issued the yearly proclamations, setting aside a week to honor Hispanic Americans. In 1987 U.S. Representative Esteban E. Torres of California proposed the expanding the observance to cover its current 31-day period. Torres wanted more time so that the nation could "properly observe and coordinate events and activities to celebrate Hispanic culture and achievement."

In 1988, Senator Paul Simon (D-Illinois), submitted a similar bill that successfully passed Congress and was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on August 17, 1988. And on September 14, 1989, President George H.W. Bush (who had been a sponsor of the original Hispanic Heritage Week resolution while serving in the House in 1968) became the first president to declare the 31-day period from September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

"Not all of the contributions made by Hispanic Americans to our society are so visible or so widely celebrated, however. Hispanic Americans have enriched our nation beyond measure with the quiet strength of closely knit families and proud communities," Bush said. In the decades since, National Hispanic Heritage Month proclamations have been made by every sitting president of the United States.

Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/hispanic-history/hispanic-heritage-month>



### October 2020 Calendar

National Hispanic Heritage Month  
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
National Bullying Prevention Month

- 1 – World Vegetarian Day
- 3-9 – Sukkot (Judaism)
- 4 – St. Francis Day (Christianity)
- 4 – National Taco Day (US)
- 4-10 – Mental Health Awareness Week
- 5 – World Teachers' Day
- 5 – World Day of Bullying Prevention
- 11 – International Day of the Girl Child
- 12 – Thanksgiving (Canada)
- 14 – Emergency Nurses Day (US)
- 16 – National Mammography Day (US)
- 17-24 – Navaratri (Hindu)
- 20 – Birth of the Bab (Baha'i)
- 29 – Mawlid an Nabi (Islam)
- 31 – Halloween (International)

## Fun Fact: History of the Taco

Source: <https://www.nationaltacoday.com/>



For a dish so widely available, the history of the taco is really unknown. But according to taco expert Jeffrey M. Pilcher, the word originates from the silver mines in Mexico in the 18th century, when taco referred to the little explosives workers used to extract the ore.

These were pieces of paper wrapped around gunpowder and placed into holes carved in the rock. "When you think about it, a chicken taquito with a good hot sauce is really a lot like a stick of dynamite," says Pilcher in an online article at Smithsonian.com. "The first references [to the taco] in any sort of archive or dictionary come from the end of the 19th century. And one of the first types of tacos described is called tacos de minero—miner's tacos. So the taco is not necessarily this age-old cultural expression; it's not a food that goes back to time immemorial."

Till others claim tacos predate the arrival of the Spanish in Mexico in the 16th century. Anthropologists say there is evidence suggesting inhabitants of the lake region of the Valley of Mexico ate tacos filled with small fish. The fish were replaced by small live insects and ants in the states of Morelos and Guerrero, while locusts and snails were favorite fillings in Puebla and Oaxaca.

Taco Bell is believed to have pushed the widespread popularity of Mexican food in the U.S. Founded in California in 1962, the chain of fast-food restaurants serves up a variety of Tex-Mex foods to more than two billion customers in 5,800 restaurants in the U.S. alone.

The hard-shell taco was invented long before Taco Bell, a discovery that would aid their expansion across North America. The U-shaped version is first noted in 1949 in a cookbook by Fabiola Cabeza de Vaca Gilbert. A device that would hold the taco in its U-shape as it deep fried helped in the mass production of this product. Kits are now available everywhere.

The word taco is the Mexican equivalent of the English word sandwich. The tortilla, which is made of corn or wheat, is wrapped or folded around a filling that is generally made of spiced proteins - beef, pork or fish.

For National Taco Day this October 4, consider the countless variations you can create using traditional meats or with seafood, chicken, beans, cheese and eggs. Yank out your garnishes - salsa, cilantro, avocado, tomatoes, onions and lettuce and you have a dish of great versatility and variety.

## ON THE JOB: WHAT IS THAT WORD?

Source: <https://shenyunwu.wordpress.com/tag/medical-interpreting/>

Part of being a good interpreter is the continual expansion of your glossary and your knowledge in interpreting. Whether it's through listening to industry talks, reading industry blogs, networking with other interpreters and learning from them, as long as you're learning and building on your skills, you're doing your part on this front.

Here's a quick tip for expanding your glossary:

When on an assignment, keep track of the words you stumbled upon or had to take a moment to remember, and add them to your glossary when you get home so you will remember them for the next time.

You might ask, "What do you mean 'if you don't know a word?'" Despite our title as interpreters and translators, we still aren't all-knowing and may still encounter unfamiliar terms. This is a fact, and it's alright. So what should we do when we get stuck on a phrase? Well, I have three tips here:

1. Remain calm. Don't freak out! It's going to be okay.
2. Remember your role. The default role of an interpreter is a conduit, which means that you are to keep the flow of communication without adding to, omitting from, or distorting the message. With this in mind, do not try to omit the word by avoiding what you don't know.
3. Just ask. If you don't know a word, ask. Your clients need you there because they need your help in getting their intended message across. Just because you don't know something doesn't make you a failure. Instead of guessing the equivalent to the target language, ask the speaker for clarification of what she meant by the specific word: "The interpreter is unfamiliar with the phrase 'xx,' could you please define it or clarify what you mean by it?" Sometimes, you'll know the translation after you hear the definition, and would be able to go back to interpreting the complete utterance. If you still don't know the equivalent to the target language, interpret the definition instead. This will allow you to keep the flow of communication without construing the message.

At the end of the appointment, if the parties were able to successfully communicate and get what they need from the conversation, you will have fulfilled your purpose. Congrats!

It's okay that we don't know everything. The important thing is to learn from our experiences and to maintain the mentality of lifelong learning.

Just keep learning and happy interpreting!

