

Thanksgiving: An American Tradition

今回は、アメリカの代表的な祝日「Thanksgiving（感謝祭）」を紹介した記事です。毎年11月の第4木曜日に行われ、この日には家族や友人が集まり、感謝の気持ちを分かち合いながら特別な食事を楽します。七面鳥やパイなど、伝統的な料理が食卓に並ぶ光景は、この季節ならではの風物詩です。文中の「harvest」は「作物を収穫する」という意味で、harvest crops（作物を収穫する）、harvest grapes（ブドウを収穫する）などのように使われます。収穫を祝う日が、人と人をつなぐ温かい時間になっているんですね。あなたの国では、家族や友人が集まって過ごす行事にどんなものがありますか？講師と話してみましょう。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

The American holiday of Thanksgiving is celebrated every year on the fourth Thursday in November. The holiday is during autumn -- the main season for **harvesting** crops. Thanksgiving is an autumn harvest festival like those found in many cultures around the world.

On this day, most Americans gather with friends and family. Many take time to think about what they are thankful for, cook up a storm, and eat.

A lot.

The star of most Thanksgiving dinners is a roasted turkey. Turkeys are large birds native to North America.

The turkey is cooked in an oven for many hours, often with a mix of celery, bread, onions and spices inside the bird. This mix becomes stuffing -- another star of the Thanksgiving dinner table.

Anna Matteo here at Learning English says the smell of turkey and stuffing roasting together is the quintessential smell of Thanksgiving. “Quintessential” means the perfect example of something.

After the bird is cooked, the stuffing is taken out and served as a side dish.

One of many side dishes. Families often make other foods like mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and vegetable casseroles. A casserole is a dish that cooks slowly in an oven.

And do not forget about the gravy. This rich sauce is made from the fatty liquid that comes off the turkey as it cooks. People cover their turkey meat, stuffing and mashed potatoes with gravy.

The meal does not end with the turkey, stuffing, and side dishes, though. For some people, the best part of the meal is dessert.

The quintessential Thanksgiving dessert is pie. Pumpkin, cherry, apple or pecan pie are all great ways to finish off a Thanksgiving meal...if you are not too full of food by that point!

Thanksgiving travel

Some Americans must travel long distances to be with their families. In fact, the Sunday after Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the entire year. This is usually when people return home from family [gatherings](#).

Not everyone can make the return home each Thanksgiving. So, young people living in cities away from their hometowns sometimes celebrate “Friendsgiving” -- a Thanksgiving meal with their friends instead of their family. They gather at someone’s apartment or house and have a “potluck.” This is a meal where everyone who is invited brings food to share with others.

Beyond the table

Thanksgiving is a big day for television, games and other entertainment.

One tradition is the television broadcast of Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. It takes place each year in New York City. Workers of the Macy’s store on Herald Square organized the first parade in 1924. Many of the workers were [immigrants](#) and wanted to hold a big parade like the ones in Europe. So, they dressed in costumes and borrowed some animals from the zoo. They also carried small balloons that floated just overhead.

Many professional American football games are also played on Thanksgiving. Fans of the sport enjoy relaxing and watching a game or two after eating a big Thanksgiving meal.

Some start Thanksgiving Day early - and in a healthy way. So-called “Turkey Trot” races take place in many towns and cities. These events involve runners dressing up in a Thanksgiving-related costume and running a short distance -- usually five kilometers.

Many Turkey Trots [urge](#) runners to bring canned food to [donate](#) to local food banks -- non-profit organizations that give food to poor people in a community.

Serving those less fortunate

Certainly, not everyone in America has an easy Thanksgiving. The United States is home to many poor and homeless people. Some cannot afford a Thanksgiving dinner. Others are without friends or families. Many religious and service organizations around the country try to fill these needs. Some provide community dinners at churches and other centers. Some groups also deliver Thanksgiving meals to people too sick or old to leave their homes.

The writer O. Henry called Thanksgiving the one holiday that is purely American. It is not linked to a religion or a certain group. Anyone in the United States on the fourth Thursday of November is welcome to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Ashley Thompson wrote this story for Learning English. It was first published in 2017.

Source: Thanksgiving: An American Tradition

[VOA](#)

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. harvest (v.) to take food from plants after they get big

Farmers harvest grapes every year in the late summer and autumn.

2. gathering (n.) a situation when many people get together for social purposes

Our family has a gathering once a week for dinner at my father's house.

3. immigrant (n.) a person who moves to another country to live

The railroads in the US were built by Chinese and Irish immigrants.

4. urge (v.) to strongly suggest or request

The guide urged the hikers to watch out for snakes on the trail.

5. donate (v.) to give money to help people

Every November, we donate canned food to the local homeless shelter.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What kind of celebration is Thanksgiving, and what do people do?
2. What do people eat on Thanksgiving?
3. Some people have a difficult time at Thanksgiving. What kinds of difficulties do they have, and how do different groups help them?
4. What major family gatherings are there in your native culture? What do people do during them?
5. What things and people are you thankful for?