

## Immigrants Around the World

The United Nations estimates that there are 230 million migrants in the world. The sidebar on page 5 shows the number and proportion of migrants in 37 countries, including those included in a recent Pew Research Center survey of attitudes about this growing global trend.

The chart on this page shows the proportion of people who participated in this survey, in 18 countries, who view immigrants more as a strength, for their work and talents, compared to those who view them as a burden, who take jobs and social benefits.

By itself, this chart tells an incomplete story. What were the circumstances of the migrants' moves to each country - fleeing war or poverty? seeking high-tech jobs? And how do these circumstances affect the immigrants' demands on a new culture? How prepared (in terms of service support, schools, housing, job training) was each country for newcomers? What national needs did immigrants fill and how aware were citizens of these?

These questions should be understood before asking how open-minded and welcoming are people around the world. Still, it seems values made a difference, too. The Pew report also notes that, within most countries, more positive attitudes were held by those with more education, younger adults, those with higher incomes and those on the political left.

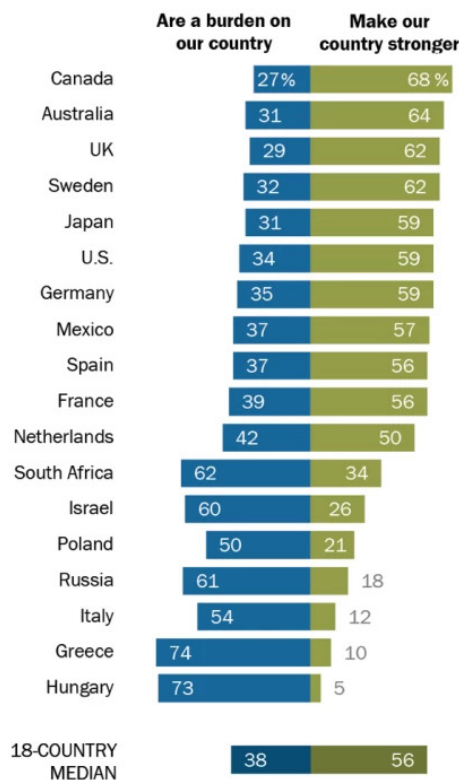
Comparing this chart with the numbers on page 5, it is interesting to note that most of the countries with less positive views about immigrants have a smaller proportion of migrants

in their population. Some of these countries are receiving migrants in quickly increasing numbers and under difficult circumstances.

You will be happy to know that in the US, attitudes about immigrants have grown more positive since 1990, when a majority worried that immigrants were a burden. Welcome!

### Half or more in many destination countries view immigrants as a strength

*Immigrants today make our country stronger because of their work and talents OR Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and social benefits*



Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey, Q54a.  
"Around the World, More Say Immigrants Are a Strength Than a Burden"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

- [Immigrants Around the World](#) 1
- [Easter](#) 2
- [Easter Eggs and Bunnies](#) 2
- [Passover](#) 3
- [Birthday Biography: Edward R. Murrow.](#) 3
- [Phishing and Tax Scams](#) 4
- [Paying US Taxes](#) 4
- [How Much Do We Pay?](#) 4
- [Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences](#) 5
- [Migrant Populations](#) 5
- [Rules of Baseball](#) 6
- [A Simple Sandwich?](#) 6
- [Modern News Media](#) 7
- [That Crazy English: Baseball Idioms](#) 8

## Compliments of English at Large

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## Easter Eggs and Bunnies

The egg is an ancient symbol of new life. Long before Jesus lived, eggs were a traditional springtime gift. For Christians, the egg is a sign of the new spiritual life that Jesus promised his believers. And the *hare* (like a large rabbit) was an ancient symbol of the moon and the goddess Eostre. (Hares are born with their eyes open. The full moon is said to be the open-eyed watcher of night.)

In the US, the rabbit (similar to a hare but more common here) has replaced the hare as a central image of Easter. Children call rabbits “bunnies,” so we have the Easter Bunny.

Unlike Christmas’ Santa Claus (about whom there is agreement), there is no one standard Easter Bunny. Is it a male or female? Rabbit-size or human-size? Does it wear clothes? How does it get into the house? Does it bring baskets filled with eggs, or does it hide eggs for children to find? Does it bring its own eggs or use the eggs the children decorated? You decide.

And why does an Easter bunny, a mammal, bring Easter *eggs*? The story goes that a German woman had hidden eggs in her garden for children to find. As they looked, a hare hopped by. The children thought the hare had laid the eggs...and a legend was born.



# Easter

Easter is perhaps the most important Christian holiday of the year. While Christians celebrate the *birth* of Jesus on Christmas, at Easter, they remember his death and the story of his *resurrection* (coming back to life). Christians believe that Jesus, the Son of God, rose from the dead, offering spiritual rebirth (new spiritual life) to all his followers. Here is the Easter story:

Jesus had become a powerful Jewish teacher and leader. Although he was popular with his many followers, he angered many others. He went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover with his 12 *disciples* (close followers). While there, an angry group of priests and elders took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor. The crowds wanted Pilate to kill Jesus. Pilate agreed. Jesus was nailed to a cross on a Friday, now known as Good Friday. (Some say this name comes from “God’s Friday.” Others think “Good” refers to “holy.”)

After Jesus died, his body was taken to a tomb. A large round stone was rolled in front of the opening. On Sunday morning, two of his followers, Mary and Mary Magdalene, found his tomb empty. They received a sign that Jesus was alive. His rising from the dead is the central event of the Easter celebration. According to the Bible, Jesus spent 40 days with his disciples before returning to heaven.

In many languages, the name of this holiday comes from the Hebrew word for Passover (*Pesach*). But the English name comes from the goddess of spring, Eostre. Eostre was honored in Germany and England in a celebration of the *vernal equinox* (the day when

both day and night are exactly 12 hours long). In Western Christian churches, Easter is the Sunday following the first full moon after March 21 (or the “ecclesiastical vernal equinox”). This year Easter is April 21.

It is traditional to dye eggs at Easter time and display them in a basket. German immigrants to the US brought this custom. To try it, buy a [food-safe] dye kit in any supermarket at Easter time and follow the very easy directions. Hard-boil the eggs first. Or punch a small hole in one end of an uncooked egg, piercing the yolk. Punch a larger hole (3-4mm) in the other end. Blow into the smaller hole, holding the egg over a bowl. The yolk and white will come out, into the bowl. Wash the shell carefully then dye it. It will last for years!

Good Friday (April 19 this year) is a government holiday in some states. Stores and businesses may be closed. Easter is not an official federal holiday (although it is always a Sunday, so government offices are closed anyway). The Monday after Easter is not generally observed as a holiday in the US as it is in some other countries. Gift- and card-giving are not traditional parts of the season (but the stores will certainly try to convince you otherwise). Many families gather for Easter dinner.

More Americans of Christian belief or descent go to church on Easter Sunday than on any other day except perhaps at Christmas. If you are interested in learning about the Christian religion in the US, Easter would be a good time to visit a church. There will be many visitors there, and you would be welcome.

## Egg Alert!

You may be used to storing uncooked eggs on your counter, not your refrigerator. But beware! By US law, large egg producers must wash the eggs they sell, to get rid of any salmonella bacteria. But that washing also gets rid of a thin protective film that keeps bacteria out in the first place! Japan has a similar law, but in the European Union, the opposite approach is taken - washing eggs is not allowed, in order to protect that film. In the US, it’s best to refrigerate your eggs.

# Passover

Passover is one of the most important Jewish holidays in the year. Passover begins on the 14th day of the month of Nisan in the Jewish calendar. This year it starts on April 20 (but note that in the Jewish calendar, days start at sunset on the previous day, so observation of Passover will begin at sunset on April 19). At Passover, Jews remember the story of their *exodus from* (going out of) slavery in Egypt 3000 years ago:

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt when God ordered Moses to lead them to freedom. God sent a series of plagues to the land — frogs, disease, locusts, and more. Each time, God stopped the plague when the *Pharaoh* (king, pronounced “FAY-roh”) promised to let the Israelites go free. But each time a plague ended, the Pharaoh broke his promise. Finally, Moses announced that the next plague would be the killing of all first-born children in Egypt. He told the Israelites to put some blood of a lamb on the door posts of their homes. This would be the signal to God to “pass over” their house and not kill their first-born children.

This time, the Pharaoh finally told the Israelites to go free. The people traveled toward the Red Sea. When they got there, the Pharaoh’s army (sent by the Pharaoh who had, again, changed his mind about freeing them) was close behind. The water parted so that the Israelites could cross through to safety. It closed again when Pharaoh’s army was crossing, drowning them all.

For several thousand years, the story of Passover has been told in this spring season. It is a story of the re-birth of life and of a people who find new political freedom and unity. At Passover, many Jews remember people of all religions around the world who still do not live in freedom.

Passover lasts seven or eight days (depending on the type of Jewish group).

Throughout Passover, Jews eat no food that has *leavening* (like yeast) in it. They may go to religious services on the first evening of Passover, then return home for a *seder*. A *seder* is a dinner, and an important, ceremonial part of observing Passover. It is not simply a family holiday meal. A *seder* includes many special symbolic foods (see below). The youngest person at the table asks a series of four questions about the meaning of Passover. The Passover story is told, along with prayers and songs of praise to God.

If you are not Jewish, you will not be expected to do any thing special during the Passover week. If you live in a town with many Jewish families, public schools may be closed for the first day or two of Passover. But most businesses and government agencies are not closed. For the first one or two days of Passover, many Jews, even those who are not very religious, will follow tradition. They may not be at work or school. In some Jewish families, inviting non-Jews to a *seder* is part of the tradition of telling the Passover story to those who do not know it. Go, if invited.

## The Symbolic Foods of Passover

<b>This food:</b>	<b>symbolizes:</b>
Matzah (unleavened bread)	The Israelites’ quick departure, leaving no time for bread to rise
Lamb bone and egg	Festival sacrifice
Mild bitter greens (parsley or lettuce) dipped in saltwater	The Israelites’ tears, the sea and springtime
Bitter herbs (like horseradish)	The bitterness of slavery
Charoset (nuts, fruit and wine)	Brick/mortar used by slaves

## Birthday Biography: Edward R. Murrow

Some say Edward R. Murrow was the most important and well-respected journalist in US history. You can learn a bit about him in the award-winning film, *Good Night, and Good Luck*, the story of Murrow’s challenge to Senator Joseph McCarthy and his fear-based fight against communism.

In fact, by the time of the McCarthy era (early 1950s), Murrow was already a household name in the US because of his reporting during World War II. His radio broadcasts from the Battle of Britain in 1939 introduced him into the American living room. His eye-witness accounts, using the newest available technologies of broadcast journalism, were coupled with his strong moral voice. He reminded his listeners of the reasons for the war, appealing to their commitment to such democratic ideals as free speech, individual liberties, and citizen participation, as bombs exploded in the background.

Murrow was born Egbert Roscoe Murrow on April 25, 1908. He spent most of his career with the broadcast company CBS — in radio and then as host of several TV news shows. Eventually, CBS found his morality-based inspirational style a poor fit for post-war America; he ended his career by heading the US Information Agency. He died in 1965, two days after his 57th birthday.

Happy 101st, Mr. Murrow.

## Paying US Taxes

The annual deadline for paying federal (and state) income taxes is traditionally April 15. In 2019, that is true *except in Maine and Massachusetts*, where it is April 17. These two states celebrate Patriot's Day on April 15 (marking the start of the American Revolution in 1775), which would bump the deadline for them to April 16. But April 16 is Emancipation Day (a holiday marking the end of slavery, observed in the national capital, home of the IRS). So they get till April 17. Here's where you can get some tax help:

- ♦ Go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) to:
  - a) download forms, instructions, and publications,
  - b) learn about electronic filing; refunds come faster if you do; see [www.irs.gov/Filing](http://www.irs.gov/Filing)
  - c) find the location of an IRS office near you, where you can ask questions in person (at [www.irs.gov/uac/Contact-Your-Local-IRS-Office-1](http://www.irs.gov/uac/Contact-Your-Local-IRS-Office-1)).
- ♦ Post offices and libraries have basic tax forms and instructions. The forms and publications are free.
- ♦ Call the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) any time — they will mail you the forms, instructions, and publications you need, or tell you how to download them to your computer. Listen in English or Spanish.
- ♦ Go to a volunteer walk-in tax advice site in your community. You may see services offered by IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program (for people with limited English).

## Phishing and Tax Scams

Around tax time, watch out for *phishing*, or internet-based tax scams (illegal attempts to get your money or personal financial information) (pronounced fishing — as in “fishing for information”). The thief uses your information to take money from your bank account, buy things with your credit card, or damage your credit rating.

For example, you might get an email that looks like it is from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) - like “tax-refunds@irs.gov” or “admin@irs.gov”. The message says you are eligible for a refund or credit and asks for your bank account information. You are directed to a website that is almost identical to the real IRS one, but is really a fake. Here, you are asked for personal and financial information that the real IRS page does not require (like your credit card number, mother's maiden name, and/or other personal information). These messages are scams. *The IRS never sends unsolicited (unrequested) email to people about tax matters.* The only way to get a tax refund is by filing a tax return.

Other scams involve telephone calls in which the caller offers you something wonderful - for example, a big *rebate* (refund) for filing taxes early. He asks for your bank account informa-

tion “for direct deposit of the rebate.” Or he says that the IRS sent you a check but you never cashed it, and asks for your bank account number. Don't give it! The IRS does not give rebates for early filers, does not gather bank information by telephone, and does not follow up on un-cashed checks.

The IRS recommends:

- ♦ Be skeptical of email or letters you are not expecting. Verify before replying.
- ♦ Do not tell anyone your PIN or secret passwords; legitimate organizations do not need or ask for this information.
- ♦ If you get an email that makes you suspicious, do not follow its links; instead, go independently to the IRS site — [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- ♦ As is always the case, never open an attachment to an email unless you are very sure what it is; it may contain a computer virus.
- ♦ Shred paper documents with financial information on them before discarding.
- ♦ Don't be fooled by a local area code. With Voice over Internet Protocol, the caller could be anywhere in the world.

Here is more information: [www.irs.gov/uac/report-phishing](http://www.irs.gov/uac/report-phishing). Forward any suspicious email to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

## How Much Tax Do We Pay?

Here, from the OECD, are the tax rates for a single wage earner with no children. The number is the average all-in personal income tax rate for a person earning an average wage.

Belgium	42.5	Iceland	28.7	Canada	22.8
Germany	39.9	Turkey	27.9	Japan	22.3
Denmark	36.1	Norway	27.6	Spain	21.1
Slovenia	33.7	Portugal	27.5	Ireland	19.4
Hungary	33.5	<b>United States</b>	<b>26.0</b>	Estonia	18.4
Austria	32.4	Poland	25.1	New Zealand	18.1
Italy	31.2	Sweden	25.0	Israel	17.7
Netherlands	30.4	Australia	24.4	Switzerland	16.9
Finland	30.2	Czech Republic	24.1	Korea	14.5
France	29.2	United Kingdom	23.4	Mexico	11.2
Luxembourg	29.1	Slovak Republic	23.1	Chile	7.0



# Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences

Are you satisfied with your children's education? Do you hope something will be different next year? In the spring, schools plan for fall. Many schools have parent-teacher conferences to discuss these plans. If your school does not, you may ask to meet with the teacher anyway.



be sure you understand what this means. It is fine to ask the teacher to talk more slowly, and to repeat what she/he has said. Some international parents ask a friend whose English is very good to come to the conference with them.

If you think your child should have some extra services from the school (like more training in English, extra challenges in their strongest subjects, an assessment of special needs, extra help for their weakest subjects, or help in social areas) this is a good time to ask. You should be able to talk about your concerns at any time. But this is one of the times the school actually invites your input. Most schools welcome suggestions and involvement from parents. You should be respectful of the school's professional judgment. Remember that they must be concerned with the well-being of all the children in the school. But it is perfectly acceptable to make your ideas known. Here are some practical tips:

- ♦ It is best for both parents to go to the parent-teacher meeting, if possible. Ask the teacher to try to schedule some meeting times that allow for parents' work schedules. You will both have a better sense of your child's school experience, and the teacher will appreciate your support and interest.

- ♦ Be sure you understand all the teacher tells you. It is common for international and American parents to leave a school conference without really understanding the meaning of what the teacher has said. If the teacher talks about standardized test scores, be sure you understand what the tests measure, what the scores mean, and what the school does with the scores. If she/he talks about putting your child into a particular group based on academic level (such as a reading group or track)

- ♦ If you have complaints about something the teacher does, think ahead about how to discuss it. Americans certainly talk about their concerns with teachers, and you can too. Have one or two specific examples in mind to discuss. Give the teacher time to explain his/her views. Remember that, in the American system, you and the teacher are considered partners in your child's education. Explain what schools are like in your own country, if it seems important. Make it clear that you understand this is an American school, but that you think it would be helpful to explain your child's school history (and future, if you will be going home soon). Make specific suggestions if you can. Then, wait a week or two to see if the situation improves. If it does not, it is fine to talk to someone else in the school about your concern. You might try the guidance counselor, the principal, or the headmaster. But start with the teacher.

- ♦ Say something positive about the teacher and/or the school. Americans like an open expression of thanks. If you are pleased with how school is going, this will be easy. If you are unhappy with the school, saying something positive will help the teacher be more willing to listen to your criticism.

- ♦ Ask for test records, work samples, reading lists, or curriculum descriptions, if you think they will be helpful when you go back to your home country. Do this each year, even if you will not be returning home for some time. Your home school will appreciate having such clear information about what your child has studied.

## Migrant Populations

Here are the numbers foreign-born residents in the countries with the highest numbers of migrants (plus some countries with smaller numbers but included in the Pew survey described on page 1.

	foreign-born population, in thousands	% of country population
USA	46,627	14.3
Germany	12,006	14.9
Russia	11,643	7.7
Saudi Arabia	10,186	31.4
UK	8,543	13.2
UAE	8,095	83.7
Canada	7,835	21.9
Australia	7,787	33.3
France	7,784	11.1
Spain	5,947	12.8
Italy	5,789	8.3
India	5,241	0.4
Ukraine	4,835	11.4
Thailand	3,913	5.6
Pakistan	3,629	2.2
Kazakhstan	3,547	21.1
South Africa	3,143	6.0
Jordan	3,112	40.2
Turkey	2,965	3.8
Kuwait	2,866	70.0
Iran	2,726	3.4
Singapore	2,544	42.9
Malaysia	2,514	8.3
Ivory Coast	2,175	12.0
Switzerland	2,439	28.9
Argentina	2,086	4.6
Japan	2,044	1.9
Israel	2,012	26.5
Lebanon	1,998	33.3
Netherlands	1,979	11.1
Qatar	1,687	73.8
Sweden	1,640	18.5
Austria	1,492	15.2
Greece	1,243	11.1
Mexico	1,193	0.9
Poland	619	1.6
Hungary	450	4.7

Source: United Nations 2015

## A Simple Sandwich?

The traditional lunch in the US is a sandwich, so you would think it would be easy to get one. "Not true," say several international newcomers I know. I recently went to order one myself with their (your?) frustration in mind.

At the sandwich shop near my house, I can choose from 19 different kinds of sandwiches on the wall menu. I pick turkey and shout my order over the heads of the six people in front of me (already upsetting...). Then the shop worker shouts these questions: "What kind of bread?" "What do you want on it?" "What kind of cheese?" "Small or large?" "For here or to go?"

In each case, I am expected to know what the choices are and to demand the precise sandwich I want. None of this "just a nice turkey sandwich, made the way your shop thinks is good." Yikes. Here is some help:

**Bread.** The common choices are:

- ♦ sliced bread from a loaf — you may have a choice among white (highly processed wheat), whole wheat (sometimes just called wheat, from less processed wheat), rye (combination of rye and wheat flours), pumpkin (rye flour only), and 7-grain (some combination of flours; may contain seeds as well)
- ♦ a round or oblong-shaped roll — usually made of white flour, but you may have a choice among flours; may be soft or crusty
- ♦ pita (or pocket) bread,
- ♦ focaccia — white (wheat) flour bread topped with spices
- ♦ a wrap — flat, soft bread that is rolled around the fillings; may come

*continued on page 7*

# Rules of Baseball

April brings the opening of the season for professional, or major league, baseball. Countless fans attend the games or listen to them on TV and radio throughout the summer. Most Americans, even unathletic ones, understand and have played baseball (or its cousin, softball). Here are enough rules to help you watch your first game. If you have more questions, ask any American!

♦ Two teams of nine players take turns being *up at bat* and *in the field*. An *inning* is one cycle of turns (Team A is up at bat, then Team B is up at bat). A game has nine innings.

♦ A baseball field has a diamond and an *outfield*. The diamond is the runway connecting four corner bases: home plate, and first, second, and third bases. The outfield is the space outside of the diamond.

♦ The team that is in the field has one player in each position: *pitcher* (who throws the ball to the batter on the other team), *catcher* (who is behind the batter at home base), *first*, *second*, and *third basemen* (one at each base), *short stop* (who stands between second and third base), and three *outfielders* (who stand far back, out in left, center, and right field).

♦ While the batter who is up at bat stands beside home plate, the pitcher must throw the ball directly over *home plate* at a height that falls between the batter's knees and shoulders. If the ball is outside this target area, the batter should not swing at it; it's called a *ball*. If the pitcher throws four such balls to one batter,

the batter gets to *walk* to first base without interruption. If the ball is inside the target area, the batter should swing at it. If he swings and misses, it's called a *strike*. If the batter does not swing at a ball that is in the target area, it's also considered a strike. If he gets three strikes in one turn, he has *struck out* and his turn is over. If he hits the ball in such a way that it goes high in the air, it's called a *fly ball*. If the other team catches a fly ball before it touches the ground, the batter is out and has to leave the field.

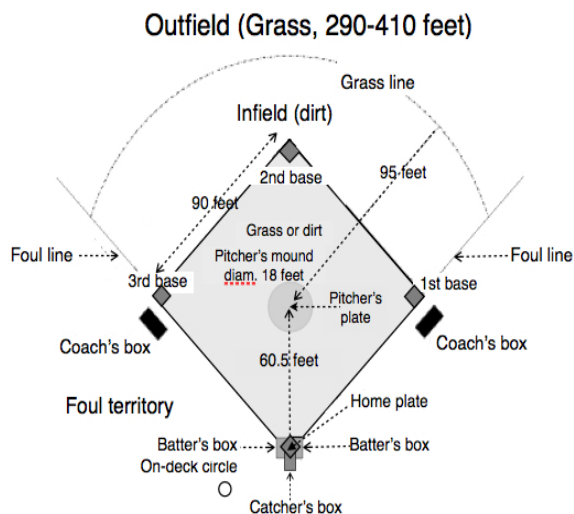
♦ If the batter hits the ball, he tries to run to each base before the other team can throw the ball there or touch the batter with the ball. He tries to run to as many bases as he can. Most often, he will only get to first base before the other team gets the ball there. If it is a close

race, the batter stops at first base, and the next batter takes a turn. If the ball gets to the base before the batter, the batter is out and he leaves the field.

♦ When the next batter starts to run to first base, the first player

runs toward second base. The player on second base runs toward third. The player on third runs to home base. A batter scores a *run* (a point) when he gets back to home plate. Players in the outfield try to get the ball to a base before a batter gets there. If they succeed, the batter is out.

♦ Sometimes, of course, the batter can get to second or third base, or even all the way



*continued on page 7*

# Modern News Media

Technology has changed how people learn the news of the day. I wonder what Edward R. Murrow would think, especially about the changing boundary between news and entertainment, and about the political nature of many news sources. Did you know:

- ♦ Forty-seven percent of Americans prefer to learn their news by watching it. 34% prefer to read it; 19% prefer to listen to it.
- ♦ Of course these categories are blurry now. Do you “read” news in a newspaper, on your computer or your smartphone? Do you “watch” it on TV or on Twitter? Do you “listen” on a radio or a podcast? In the US, 44% prefer TV, 34% prefer internet, 14% radio and 7% print.
- ♦ Of course, *those* categories are blurry, too. If you have an online subscription to a local or national news “paper,” that doesn’t count in the “print” category. I subscribe to a magazine that arrives weekly at my home, but I also get daily articles from each issue on my phone - what’s that?
- ♦ About two thirds of Americans get at least some of their news on social media: mostly Facebook (43%) but also YouTube (21%), Twitter (12%), Instagram (8%), LinkedIn (6%), Reddit (5%), Snapchat (5%), WhatsApp (2%) and Tumblr (1%). But get this -- a majority of social media users (57%) believe that social media news sources are “largely inaccurate.” Go figure.
- ♦ Speaking of whether something is accurate (vs. “fake news”), Pew presented 5000+ Americans with statements and asked whether they were “factual” or “opinion.” Adults who were more politically aware, digitally savvy, trusting of news media and very interested in the news were more likely to be able to tell facts from opinions. (What is cause and what is effect here??)

Source: Pew Research Center: *Journalism and Media*.

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*continued from page 6*

## THE RULES OF BASEBALL

around to home plate before the ball catches up with him. This is called a *home run*, or a *homer*. If a batter gets a home run when the *bases are loaded* (there is a player from his team on first, second, and third base when he steps up to bat), it is called a *grand slam*. All four batters score runs in that turn.

- ♦ A player is allowed to run from one base to another in between batters’ turns up at bat. If he gets to the new base before the other team throws the ball there, he has *stolen the base*.
- ♦ When players on the team at bat have had three outs, the other team comes up to bat. The team with the most points at the end of nine innings wins.
- ♦ There are two Major Leagues in professional baseball — the National League and the American League. During the Major League season (April through September), teams compete mostly against other teams in their league. Then, each League has a series of play-off games within Divisions, in what is called the “Pennant race.” The winners of each League’s Pennant race then compete against each other in a seven-game “World Series.”

*continued from page 6*

in different colors, made from the addition of different vegetables (more choices).

**Fillings.** You will have a choice of many fillings, including meat, fish, egg and vegetables. *Cold cuts* (pre-sliced meats like turkey, ham, roast beef, corned beef, pastrami, and salami) are the most common. Salami is a ready-to-eat sausage made of chopped pork or beef, seasoning, and fat. *Corned beef* has been kept in spiced *brine* (salty water); *pastrami* is also beef, kept in a different set of spices. Some shops will fill a sandwich with grilled or deep-fried meat or fish. Or you may choose from several kinds of *salad* fillings (like tuna, chicken, ham, or egg salad). Here, the fully cooked (or canned) meat/egg is chopped into small pieces, and mixed with mayonnaise and celery, onion, and other flavorings.

**Cheese.** The most common cheese choices are:

- ♦ *Provolone* (a pale yellow, smooth cheese from Italy)
- ♦ *Swiss* (usually an American imitation of Switzerland’s Emmentaler, a nutty-flavored cheese with big holes in each slice.)
- ♦ *American* (a natural cheese, specially processed to make it smoother and to last longer. It may also include colorings and chemical preservatives. (My advice: pick something else...))

**Extras.** There are many local variations, but expect to be asked if you want mayonnaise, mustard, pickles, spicy peppers, raw onion, lettuce, and/or tomato.

Newcomer's Almanac is published monthly by The Interchange Institute, for people who have recently moved to the United States. Its goal is to promote international understanding by providing information about the American holidays, customs, values, social issues, and language that often confuse and surprise newcomers. It is written by Anne P. Copeland, PhD, who is a clinical psychologist and the Director of The Interchange Institute. She is an American and has lived and worked overseas with her family.

The Interchange Institute is a not-for-profit organization that studies the impact of intercultural transitions on individuals, their families, and the organizations for which they work. From the results of this research, the Institute offers seminars and workshops, produces publications, and provides consultative services to the international newcomers, their organizations, and to host communities, recognizing that change and insight on both sides facilitates smooth transition.

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## That Crazy English: Baseball Idioms

American English is rich in idioms from the game of baseball. Read the [Rules of Baseball](#) on pages 6-7 to understand these better:

For years she watched the committee do its work without helping; now it's her turn *up at bat*. (*For years she watched the committee do its work without helping; now it's her turn to do the work and be the leader.*)

It began as a friendly chat but then he started *to play hardball*. (*It began as a friendly chat but then he started to ask difficult questions and make hostile remarks.*) (Professional baseball is played with a hard, small ball. The game of "softball" uses a larger, softer ball.)

When she suggested hanging balloons from the ceiling, they thought she was *out in left field*. (*They thought hanging balloons was nonsense, inappropriate, and/or unrealistic.*)

He never seemed to know *who was on first*. (*He never seemed to know what was going on around him.*) (This refers to "being on first [base].")

He went to job interview after job interview, but each time, he *struck out*. (*He looked many places for a new job, but never found one.*)



## UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

Read *The Rules of Baseball* on page 6. Mark each of the following sentences True or False. Change all the sentences you mark False to make them correct.

- |                                                                                                                             | True                     | False                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. After one team has gotten three strikes, one <del>inning</del> <i>the other team is up at bat.</i> is over.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. A player who makes a grand slam earns four points for his team.                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. The final game of the season is the Pennant Race.                                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Batters usually have time to run past first base after they hit the ball.                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. If a batter hits a fly ball and the other team catches it before it hits the ground, it is considered a strike.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. The only way to get a strike is to swing at a ball and miss.                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. If a player steals a base, he is out.                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. If the pitcher throws a ball outside the target area four times to one batter, the batter may walk safely to first base. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. A short stop stands between first and second base.                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. It is possible for a player to be on third base when no player is on first or second base.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. It is good to hit a homer when the bases are loaded.                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## HOMEWORK

## WITH A PEN

1. Read [The Rules of Baseball](#) on pages 6. Write the rules to a popular sports game in your home country. How does the game begin and end? Do the players have different jobs?

2. Read [Passover](#) on page 3. Write a description of the food (and its symbolic meaning) served at an important holiday in your country.

3. Read [That Crazy English](#) on page 8. Write a list of three idioms in your home language that are based on a sport. Translate them into English and explain what they mean.

4. Read [Easter Eggs and Bunnies](#) on page 2. Think of an animal or mythical character that is associated with a holiday in your home country. Is there ancient meaning or symbolism to the creature? Write a brief paragraph to describe it.

5. Read [Immigrants Around the World](#) on page 1. Write a list of all the ways the US benefits from having you and your family live here! Now think of an immigrant in your home country; what benefits and strengths did he/she bring?

6. Read [A Simple Sandwich?](#) on pages 6.-7. Think of a common lunch dish in your home country. Describe it and any choices a diner would need to make.

2

## TAX VOCABULARY

Read [Paying US Taxes](#) on page 4. Below is a simplified copy of the beginning of the US income tax form, followed by some vocabulary words. Complete the form for yourself or an imaginary friend. Pick the correct meaning of each word, in the context of a tax form.

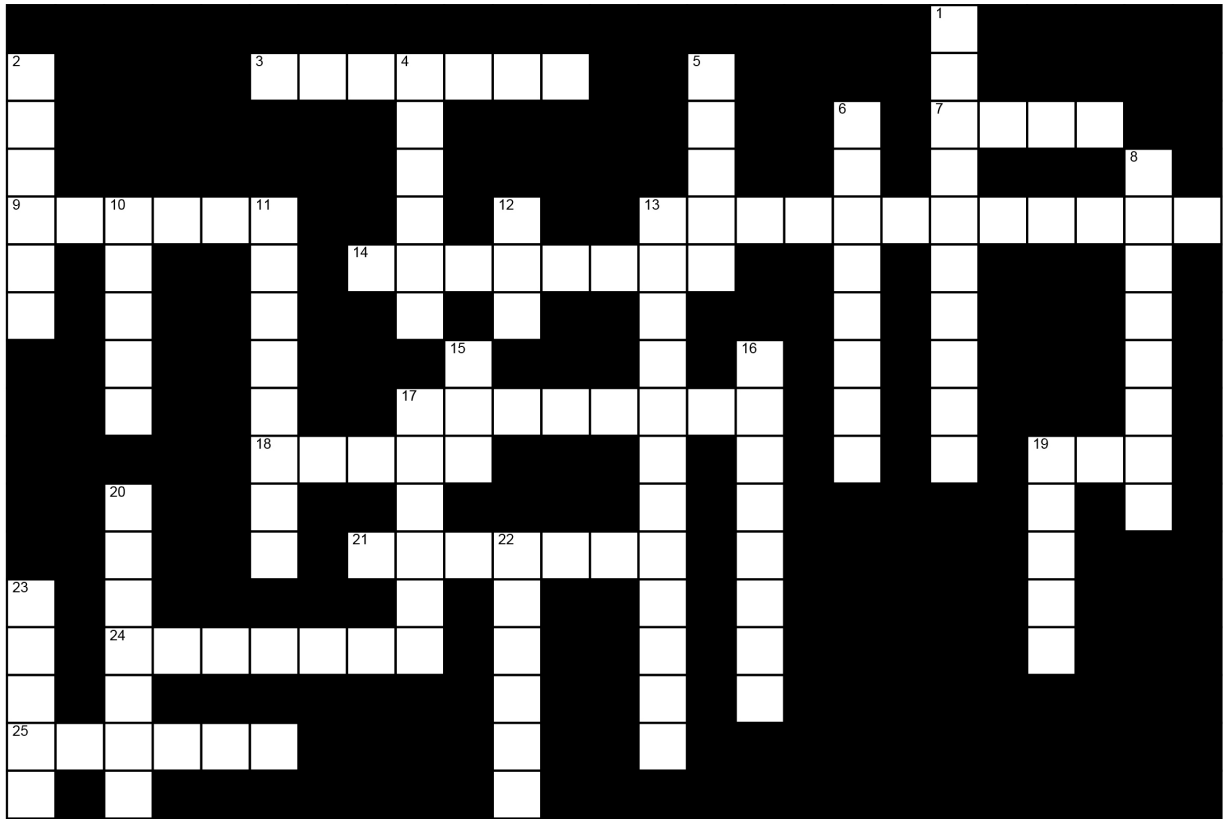
<b>1040</b>	Department of the Treasury — Internal Revenue Service <b>U.S. Individual Income Tax Return</b>									
<b>Label</b>  <b>Use the IRS label.</b> Otherwise, please print or type.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">Your first name and initial</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">Last name</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">If a joint return, spouse's first name and initial</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Last name</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 2px;">Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see page 19.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 2px;">City, town or post office, state and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, see page 19.</td> </tr> </table>	Your first name and initial	Last name	If a joint return, spouse's first name and initial	Last name	Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see page 19.		City, town or post office, state and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, see page 19.		Your social security number _____ Spouse's social security number _____ <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">             ▲ <b>Important!</b> ▲              You must enter your SSN(s) above.         </div>
Your first name and initial	Last name									
If a joint return, spouse's first name and initial	Last name									
Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see page 19.										
City, town or post office, state and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, see page 19.										
<b>Filing Status</b> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Single 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Married filing joint return (even if only one had income) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Married filing separate return. 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Head of household (with qualifying person) If the qualifying person is a child but not your dependent, enter this child's name here. 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Qualifying widow(er) with dependent child (year spouse died _____)	Check only one box.									

word	meaning (a)	meaning (b)
1. return	go back	form for paying taxes
2. postmarked	received by the IRS	received by the Post Office
3. refunds	taxes you overpaid	extra taxes you owe
4. filing	tax-paying	making smooth
5. cautious	trusting	careful
6. reputable	known for honesty	famous
7. ultimately	in the end	partially
8. audit	official check on accuracy	trial for wrong-doing
9. affiliated	friendly with	connected to officially

## BASEBALL IDIOMS

Read [That Crazy English](#) on page 8. Re-write these sentences using a baseball idiom:

1. I tried to make a reservation at many restaurants but did not succeed. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Their new tax proposal is completely absurd. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. It's your turn to lead the group in the direction you think is best. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



### Across

3. a baseball field
7. 47% Americans like to learn their \_\_\_ by watching it.
9. The only way to get a tax \_\_\_ is by filing a tax return.
13. At Easter, Christians remember the \_\_\_ of Jesus.
14. At \_\_\_, Jews remember the story of their leaving Egypt.
17. the typical American lunch
18. A baseball player earns a point for his team when he returns to the home \_\_\_.
19. to have a turn up at \_\_\_, to be the leader
21. person who throws a baseball to be hit by the other team
24. Don't ignore the Internal \_\_\_ Service.
25. one ninth of a baseball game

### Down

1. A parent-teacher \_\_\_ is a good time to learn about your child's progress in school.
2. Edward R. \_\_\_, a well-respected journalist in the mid-20th century
4. unleavened bread, part of a Passover meal
5. a ceremonial Passover meal
6. play \_\_\_, ask difficult questions
8. pre-sliced lunch meats (two words)
10. out in left \_\_\_, an unusual idea
11. close follower of an important, influential leader
12. the country with the highest number of foreign-born residents (abbreviation)
13. In the US, you should keep your eggs in the \_\_\_.
15. the country with the largest proportion of migrants in its population (abbreviation)
16. internet-based tax scam
17. \_\_\_ out, have no success
19. The Easter \_\_\_ brings (or hides) eggs.
20. a person who moves from one place to another
22. the country with the most positive views about immigrants
23. types of journalism

## OUT AND ABOUT

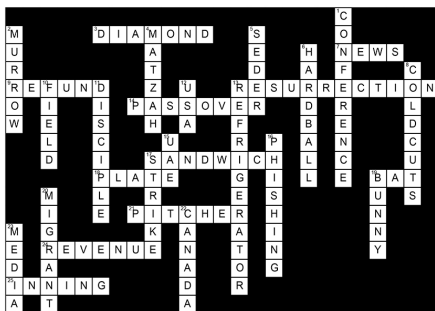
1. Read [The Rules of Baseball](#) on page 6. Watch at least 2 innings of a baseball game (on TV or in a playground). Observe a strike, a fly ball, an out, and a ball. Identify the pitcher, catcher, and short stop.
2. Read [Easter Eggs and Bunnies](#) on page 2. Look at the different images of an Easter bunny in your community — are they male or female? clothed or not? large or small?
4. Read about [Passover](#) on page 3. In your supermarket in early April, look for special Passover foods.
5. Read [Modern News Media](#) on page 7. Observe yourself for one week. How do you learn news about the US? about your home country? Do you watch, read or listen? On what kind of device?

## IF YOU USE THE WEB

1. Read *The Rules of Baseball* on page 6. Go to [www.mlb.com](http://www.mlb.com) to find a list of teams and their schedules. Click on Schedule. Pick the team closest to where you live in the US as "your team." Can you go??

2. Read *Modern News Media* on page 7. Take the "fact vs. opinion" quiz mentioned in the article here: [www.pewresearch.org/quiz/news-statements-quiz/](http://www.pewresearch.org/quiz/news-statements-quiz/) (Note - this is not about whether you agree with the statement, but just whether it is something that could be confirmed with facts/data vs is someone's opinion.) How did you do?

3. Read *Birthday Biography: Edward R. Murrow* on page 3. Listen here to one of his most famous broadcasts, of the 1940 London Blitz: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIKaP5YCB8k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIKaP5YCB8k) Reflect on the link between this moment and today's use of social media.



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## WITH A FRIEND

1. Read the articles about taxes on [page 4](#). Describe to a partner how the government in your home country gets the money it needs. How is this process different from in the US? Discuss any things an individual has to pay for in the US that are provided free in your home country.

2. Read *Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences* on page 5. With a partner, take one of the following roles of a parent or a teacher. Pretend you have just started a parent conference.

*Parent:* Your daughter Anna is in fourth grade. When you see her teacher, the teacher always smiles and says what a wonderful student Anna is. So you were surprised when Anna did not get all A grades on her latest report. You have increased the amount of time Anna must spend on her homework, but you plan to ask the teacher to be more strict, and to give you more honest feedback about Anna's work.

### Useful Phrases

*There is one thing I wanted to discuss with you...*

*I see what you mean. But from my point of view...*

*My most important goals for Anna are...*

*Did you know that Anna...*

*I appreciate that you...*

*Teacher:* Your student Anna is a delightful child. She seems happy, has many friends, works hard, and seems to be learning well, even though she has just been speaking English for one year. But in the past few weeks you have noticed that Anna seems tired and sad. You plan to ask her parents to relax a little and not be so strict with Anna.

Talk together for 2-3 minutes then switch roles. Which role was easier for you? Why?

3. Read about *Phishing and Tax Scams* on page 4. Compare the issue of fraud and cheating, and how to protect against it, in the US and your home country.

## ANSWER CORNER

### Understanding What you Read

2. T    3. F The final game ... is in the World Series.
4. F Batters usually do not have time...
5. F If a batter hits a fly ball ... the batter is out.
6. F One way to get a strike is to ....
7. F If a player steals a base, he is not out.
8. T    9. F A short stop stands between 2nd and 3rd base.
10. T    11. T

**Tax Vocabulary**  
1b 2b 3a 4a 5b  
6a 7b 8b 9a

### Baseball Idioms

1. I tried to make a reservation at many restaurants but I struck out.
2. Their new tax proposal is out in left field.
3. It's your turn up at bat