International Mother Language Day

There are about 6,500 languages in the world, but did you know that a language disappears and dies every two weeks? International Mother Language Day, on 21 February, is a day to celebrate and protect all the languages of the world.

A language is much more than just a way of communicating. Language, and particularly our mother tongue, is an important part of our culture. Some people even think that our language can change how we see the world.

### A special day

In 1999, a special day to promote mother languages was created: International Mother Language Day. The day was also intended to raise awareness of just how many languages we have on this planet (around 6,500) and to protect them. The idea for this special day came from the country of Bangladesh, and 21 February is also the day when Bangladeshis mark the day that the Bangla language was officially accepted. Bangladeshis celebrate both days by holding literary competitions and singing songs.

### Different themes each year

Every year, UNESCO chooses a different theme and holds different events at its headquarters in Paris, France. For example, in 2005, there was a focus on Braille and sign languages, and in 2017, a focus on how multilingual education could help the world to have a better future.

Other countries have also set up special projects to mark this day. For example, in 2014, the Indian government released digital learning materials for schools and colleges in the 22 most widely spoken Indian languages. It is estimated that there are around 750 languages or dialects in India, and, sadly, that around 250 more languages have been lost in the last 50 years.

### The importance of the mother tongue in education

The Director General of UNESCO, Audrey Azouley, pointed out in a recent speech on International Mother Language Day that mother languages 'shape millions of developing young minds'. She believes that children learn best in their mother tongue, and that it is important that children should have this opportunity. Around the world, 40 per cent of the population does not have access to education in a language they can understand or speak. Using certain languages can make it easier, or much harder, to do well in life.

### Language goes to the heart

Nelson Mandela once said, 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.' At least 43 per cent of all languages are endangered, and fewer than 100 of the world's languages are used in the digital world. Most internet communication is in one of the following languages: English, Chinese Mandarin, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Indonesian, Malayan, Japanese, Russian and German. But everyone has the right to use their own mother language, and to keep the memories, traditions and ways of thinking that their language represents. And this is what International Mother Language Day is all about.

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/general-english/magazine/international-mother-language-day>

**Coca-Cola Wants to Recycle All Packaging By 2030**

Coca-Cola, [the world's largest soft drink **corporation**](https://www.english-online.at/news-articles/business-economy/coca-cola-dominates-world.htm), is planning to **recycle**all of its bottles and cans by 2030. The company wants to take on more **responsibility**and make its **contribution**to saving our **environment**. The company sells over 500 types of **fizzy drinks**, juices and mineral water around the world.

Coca-Cola has **announced**a**campaign** called "World Without Waste". It says that food and **beverage** companies are responsible for much of the **litter**that can be found on streets and beaches.

The company said it wants to **increase** the **amount**of material that can be recycled in its products. By 2030 Coca-Cola **aims**at making 50% of all the content in bottles and cans recyclable. It also **intends** to **advise**users on how to recycle products best. Coca-Cola plans to work together with local **governments** and environmental groups.

On the other side, Coca-Cola has also stated that that **packaging** is important because it can **reduce**the amount of **spoilt food** and can **extend** the **shelf life** of food products.

Greenpeace, one of the most important environmental organisations, has **welcomed**the **move** but also said that the company should focus **especially**on reducing the amount of plastic that is produced. Plastic bottles are a **major**problem because plastic does not break down and **degrade**quickly. It is eaten by animals and fish and ends up in our [food chain](https://www.english-online.at/biology/food-chain/food-chain.htm)

<https://www.english-online.at/news-articles/environment/coca-cola-to-recycle-all-packaging-by-2030.htm>

**Winnie Mandela – South Africa’s Mother of the Nation**

Winnie Mandela was a female [South African](https://www.english-online.at/geography/south-africa/geography-south-africa.htm)**activist** who fought against **Apartheid**, together with her husband, South Africa's first black president, [Nelson Mandela](https://www.english-online.at/video/people/nelson-mandela.htm). She died at the age of 81 in her home in Soweto, Johannesburg after a long **illness**.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was born in 1936 in the Eastern Cape province, which at that time was the **homeland** of Transkei. In her early life, she was a social worker in a hospital.

In the 1950s she met Nelson and married him in 1958. When her husband was **imprisoned**in 1963 it was Winnie who led the **movement** against Apartheid. For over two and a half **decades** she  **campaigned**for his **release**. During this period Winnie Mandela was her husband's link to the outside world.

Winnie was a **prominent** member of the [**African National Congress**](https://www.english-online.at/news-articles/world/africa/anc-celebrates-hundredth-birthday.htm) and the head of its Women's League. When Nelson Mandela was **released**from **Robben Island**, it was the "Mother of the Nation", as she was often called, who marched with him to **freedom**.

**Shortly afterwards**, the couple separated and **divorced** in 1996, two years after Nelson Mandela had become [South Africa's first black president](https://www.english-online.at/video/people/nelson-mandela.htm).

Winnie Mandela **continued** her political career and became a **deputy minister** in the first **post-Apartheid** **government**. She was a member of parliament for several years.

However, Winnie was also a **controversial** figure and involved in many scandals. During the final years of Apartheid, she was **accused** of violence and **blamed** for killing and kidnapping **informers** in Soweto. She was **sentenced** to six years in prison, which was later turned into a **fine**.

After her death on 2 April 2018, politicians and **human rights** activists from all over the world **praised** South Africa's most famous woman. **Former** Archbishop Desmond Tutu **admired** her as a **revolutionary** figure in his country's history. The African National Congress said that the party had lost an **icon**.

**Jeans – History and Popularity Of Great Clothes**

Jeans have become one of the most worn pieces of **clothing** in the world. Everybody wears them, from the **rural** farmer to the **urban lawyer** and from models to housewives. But why have jeans become so **popular**. You’ll get many answers. For some people they look cool, for others jeans are simply comfortable.

Jeans were first designed as **durable** trousers for farm workers and **miners** in the states of the American west. A Nevada **tailor**, Jacob Davis, had the idea of using **copper bolts** at the corner of the pockets to make them stronger. They became popular **instantly** and soon many people bought them.

**Although** Davis knew that he had a great product which many people wanted to buy, he didn’t have the money to **patent** it. He asked Levi Strauss, who **supplied** him with **cloth**, to help him out. The two worked together and started making jeans out of **denim**, which was more comfortable and could be easily **stretched**. It also became softer as it got older. They were dyed with **indigo** because it did not go through the cloth like other **dyes** do.

At first jeans were worn only by workers, **especially** in factories. In the eastern part of the US jeans were **hardly** worn at all. They were **associated** with **rural** people and the working class. But when rich easterners went on holidays to **escape** everyday life they often put on jeans.

James Dean and Marlon Brando made them popular in [movies](https://www.english-online.at/entertainment/motion-pictures/movies.htm) and everyone wanted to wear them. Jeans became a symbol of the youth rebellion during the 1950s and 1960s. College students started to wear them as a protest against the [Vietnam War](https://www.english-online.at/history/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-background.htm) and the **establishment**. The new trousers were **banned** in American schools and sometimes in theatres and cinemas. As time went on jeans became more **acceptable** and today they are worn not only as **casual** clothes but also at **formal** events.

Other countries quickly started to get **accustomed** to wearing jeans too. American **servicemen** **on duty** in Europe and Japan often wore them when they were not on duty to show that they were Americans. The trousers showed the world a happier way of life, something that people needed, especially after what they had **endured** in [World War II](https://www.english-online.at/history/world-war-2/world-war-2-introduction.htm).

Jeans were also worn because they made people **equal**. You could **afford** them and they couldn’t be **torn** so easily. They had **practical advantages** as well. They didn’t need to be washed as often as other trousers and women didn’t need to **iron** them. This became more important as more and more women started working and had less time for housework.

Today jeans are an **essential** part of our lives. They are almost always washed a few times before being sold to give them their **faded appearance**.

<https://www.english-online.at/culture/jeans/jeans-popularity-of-great-clothes.htm>