



**Fluentlicious**  
Materials for language learning

# Weird & Wonderful Habits From Around the World

# Weird & Wonderful Habits From Around the World

You will read a list of strange or unusual habits/traditions from around the world. Some are true, some are false — you don't know which! Discuss each one with your partner/teacher and decide if they are true or false. Use modal verbs for deduction in your sentences.

## Useful Phrases:

### **Certainty (true):**

This must be true.  
It has to be true.  
It's definitely true.

### **Possibility:**

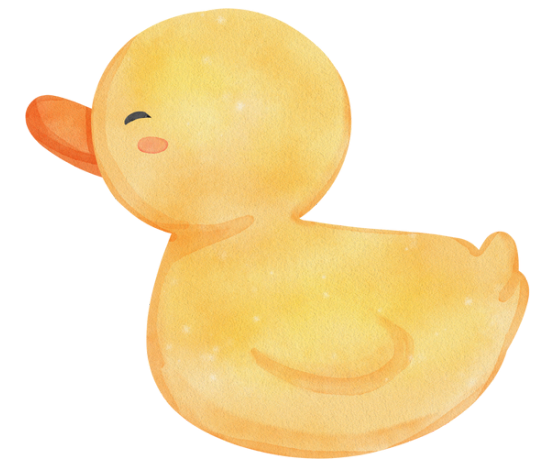
This might be true.  
It could be true.  
Maybe it's true.

### **Certainty (false):**

This can't be true.  
It's impossible.  
There's no way this is true.

# Kalle Anka in Sweden

Every Christmas Eve, millions of Swedes watch a Donald Duck TV special at 3 p.m.



# Kalle Anka in Sweden

**TRUE** – Every Christmas Eve at 3 p.m., millions of Swedes watch the Disney TV special Kalle Anka och hans vänner önskar God Jul (“Donald Duck and His Friends Wish You a Merry Christmas”). The show first aired in 1959 and has become a tradition stronger than Christmas dinner for many families. Streets are often quiet during the broadcast because nearly everyone is watching.

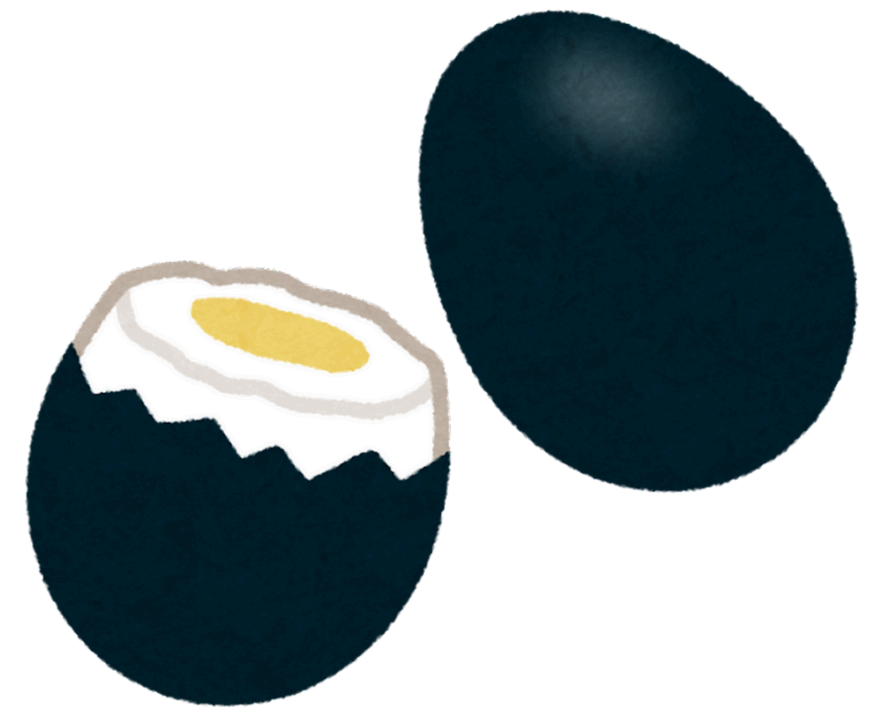
Source: <https://slate.com/culture/2009/12/sweden-s-bizarre-tradition-of-watching-donald-duck-kalle-anka-cartoons-on-christmas-eve.html>





# Japan's Black Eggs

Eating a black egg boiled in volcanic hot springs in Hakone is said to add 7 years to your life.



# Japan's Black Eggs

**TRUE** – In Hakone's volcanic Owakudani Valley, eggs are boiled in natural hot springs rich in sulphur. The shells turn black, but the inside tastes like a normal boiled egg. Local legend says eating one adds seven years to your life. Tourists travel especially to try these eggs.

Source: <https://slate.com/culture/2009/12/sweden-s-bizarre-tradition-of-watching-donald-duck-kalle-anka-cartoons-on-christmas-eve.html>



# No Elevator Tuesdays in New York

Some apartment buildings have a rule where residents must use the stairs every Tuesday for “community health.”



# No Elevator Tuesdays in New York

**FALSE** – Totally made up.



# Shoe Soup in Finland

At a winter festival, people bring old shoes, fill them with soup, and eat together.



# Shoe Soup in Finland

**FALSE** – 100% invented.



# Tomato Battle in Spain

La Tomatina festival involves throwing thousands of tomatoes at each other.



# Tomato Battle in Spain

**TRUE** – La Tomatina takes place every August in the town of Buñol. Thousands of people throw overripe tomatoes at each other for fun. The streets become covered in red tomato pulp, and afterwards fire trucks wash everything down. It started as a local food fight in the 1940s and grew into a world-famous festival.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_Tomatina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Tomatina)





# Air Kissing in France

Friends greet each other with two, three, or even four kisses on the cheek depending on the region.



# Air Kissing in France

**TRUE** – In France, people often greet friends and family with kisses on the cheek. The number depends on the region — it might be two, three, or even four. The custom is called la bise, and knowing the “correct” number can be confusing even for French people.

Source: <https://www.frenchlearner.com/culture/la-bise/>



# Upside-Down Christmas Trees in Ukraine

Some families hang their Christmas tree from the ceiling as a symbol of prosperity.



# Upside-Down Christmas Trees in Ukraine

**FALSE** – Some people do hang upside-down trees, but it's not a Ukrainian tradition.



# Monkey Buffet in Thailand

A festival where huge tables of fruit and snacks are set out for monkeys to enjoy.



# Monkey Buffet in Thailand

**TRUE** – In Lopburi, Thailand, the Monkey Buffet Festival is held every November. Locals prepare huge tables of fruit, vegetables, and sweets for the city's monkeys. It's both a way to thank the animals, who are believed to bring good luck, and a big tourist attraction. Sometimes the monkeys climb all over the tables before the food is even ready.

Source: <https://www.travelbeginsat40.com/event/monkey-buffet-festival-lopburi-thailand/>



# Water Throwing in Myanmar

During New Year's celebrations, people splash water on each other for good luck.





# Water Throwing in Myanmar

**TRUE** – Thingyan, the Burmese New Year festival in April, is celebrated with massive water fights. People splash each other with buckets, hoses, and water guns to wash away the bad luck of the old year. Streets are full of music, dancing, and laughter. It's one of the most important holidays in Myanmar.

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thingyan>





# Cheese Rolling in England

People run down a steep hill chasing a large rolling wheel of cheese.



# Cheese Rolling in England

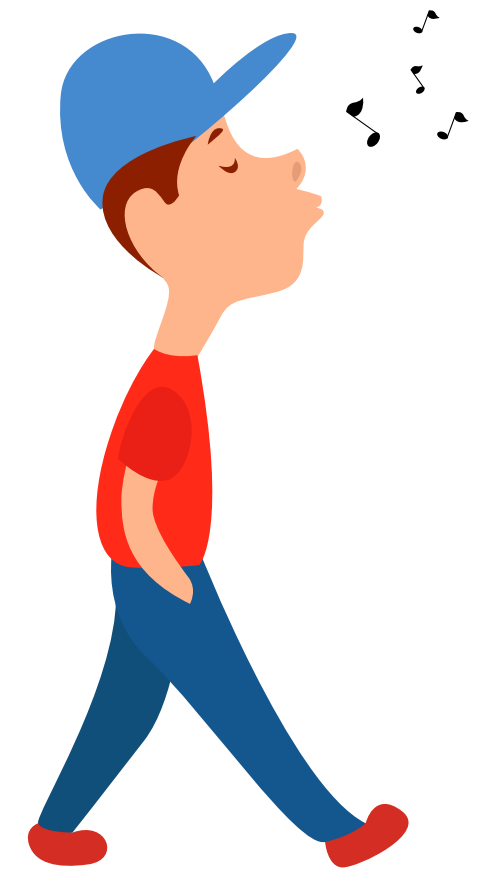
**TRUE** – At Cooper's Hill in Gloucestershire, people race down a very steep hill chasing a large round of Double Gloucester cheese. The hill is so steep that many runners fall, trip, and roll down. The winner keeps the cheese. Despite injuries, it's a beloved tradition that attracts participants from all over the world.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooper%27s\\_Hill\\_Cheese-Rolling\\_and\\_Wake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooper%27s_Hill_Cheese-Rolling_and_Wake)



# Midnight Whistling in Peru

Villagers whistle at midnight to scare away evil spirits.



# Midnight Whistling in Peru

**FALSE** – Made up.



# Ice Cream for Breakfast Day in the USA

Celebrated in some towns every first Saturday of February.



# Ice Cream for Breakfast Day in the USA

**TRUE** – This quirky holiday began in the 1960s in Rochester, New York. A mother wanted to cheer up her children during the cold winter, so she let them have ice cream for breakfast. It became a family tradition and spread to other towns. Now, people in different countries also celebrate it.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice\\_Cream\\_for\\_Breakfast\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice_Cream_for_Breakfast_Day)



# Full Moon Karaoke in Vietnam

Coastal towns host public karaoke nights only during the full moon.



# Full Moon Karaoke in Vietnam

**FALSE** – Not a tradition (yet).





# Grave Picnic in Romania

Families gather in cemeteries to eat and drink with their departed loved ones.



# Grave Picnic in Romania

**TRUE** – In some rural areas of Romania, families gather in cemeteries on certain religious holidays. They bring food, drinks, and sometimes even music to share with their deceased relatives. The idea is to remember and celebrate their lives rather than mourn. It's both a family and community event.

Source: <https://www.whitemad.pl/en/colour-satire-and-death-with-a-smile-merry-cemetery-in-romania/>



# Camel Beauty Contest in Saudi Arabia

Camels are judged on their beauty, and winners get huge prizes.



# Camel Beauty Contest in Saudi Arabia

**TRUE** – The King Abdulaziz Camel Festival attracts thousands of visitors every year. Owners bring camels to compete based on beauty, especially features like long eyelashes, elegant necks, and posture. The prize money is huge, sometimes in the millions of dollars. In recent years, camels with cosmetic “enhancements” like Botox have even been disqualified.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-59593001>





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