

That's Interesting!



A worksheet for adults to practise reading, writing, spelling and numbers

Irish fairs and festivals



In Ireland we love our festivals and 2023 has seen all the usual ones taking place again this year. However, some of these festivals have been going for many hundreds of years.

Puck Fair takes place in the small town of Killorglin in Co. Kerry on the 10, 11 and 12 of August every year. Regarded as the oldest festival in Ireland, the first fair can be traced back to the 1600's.

On day one of the festival, a wild, mountain, male goat, which is known as a puck, is declared the King of the Fair and a crown is placed on his head. He is then, brought through the town on the back of a lorry where he leads the parade. A queen of the fair is also chosen from among young girls living in the area.

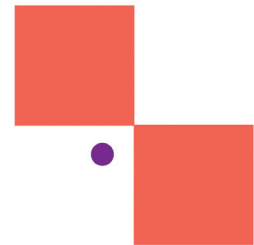


Puck Fair

Image source: IrishFireside, CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

It is not known for certain why the fair is named in honour of a goat. It is believed that hundreds of years ago, a herd of goats ran down from the mountains to warn the people that an army of British warriors were coming to raid the town. Others believe that the male goat was seen as a symbol of good luck for a good harvest in the coming year.

In the past, the goat would be held for the three days of the festival, but now he only appears on the first evening and on the last day for a short period. The festival is filled with street entertainment, concerts, a funfair and, of course, a large outdoor market on the town's main street.



Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival has been going since the 1800's. The festival takes place during the entire month of September in the small town of Lisdoonvarna in Co Clare. In the past, it was attended mostly by people from the farming community. September was their rest month after the busy harvest season. It was also an opportunity to meet a partner and use the services of the local matchmaker who had an office in the centre of the small town.

The matchmaker was a man named Willie Daly and he had a book known as the Matchmaking book, in which he held all the personal details of anyone who wished for him to find them a match. He was very successful over the years and there were many hundreds of couples who met in Lisdoonvarna.

Today the great grandson of Willie Daly, also called Willie Daly, is continuing the matchmaking tradition and he still uses the same famous book which is now believed to be 150 years old. Today, during the month of September, Lisdoonvarna comes alive with dancing and sing-songs taking place every day from early in the morning until late in the evening. Many thousands of people still visit and enjoy the festival every year.



Matchmaker, Willie Daly with the famous book

Image source: Alamy

Horse Fairs have always been a big part of life in Ireland. In fact, up until the 1970's nearly every small town and village held a horse fair. They were not just a day for buying and selling horses but street traders set up stalls that sold everything from tools and tea sets to fresh vegetables. Today there are still a few large horse fairs held in Ireland.

Spancil Hill in Co Clare is home to the annual horse fair which is held on June 23 each year and has become famous worldwide because of the well-known song "The Cross of Spancil Hill". Horses, ponies and donkeys can be bought or sold here on the day. Prizes are also given to the best horses of the fair.



Fair of Spancil Hill

Image source: Blight55, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Last year, Spencil Hill celebrated its 400th anniversary and, over the 400 years, the fair has had to be cancelled only a few times. The most recent being in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid.

Taking place every year on the Tuesday following the October bank holiday, is the **Maam Cross Pony Fair** in Connemara, Co Galway. For many hundreds of years, people have come to the famous crossroads to buy and sell the famous Connemara Ponies. In the past the small farmers in the area around Connemara would sell vegetables, eggs and turf in order to make a few extra pounds before the winter.

Today the fair still brings large crowds to the area where there is music and entertainment. Sheep and cattle are also bought and sold here.

The largest horse fair in Ireland today is the **Ballinasloe Horse Fair** which takes place in the Co. Galway town every year, beginning on the first Sunday in October. The fair itself can be traced back to the 1800's. Today it has become more than just a horse fair and is held over eight days. The town of Ballinasloe comes alive with fun events, street stalls, fireworks, tug-o-war, arts & crafts, music and children's events.



Ballinasloe Horse Fair

Image source: Paul Reynolds, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

A six-acre green area in the town, known as the Fair Green, is where every breed of horse and pony can be seen. As many as 85,000 people come to Ballinasloe Horse Fair over the week-long festival

When we use these



| There, Their and They're | Two, Too and To |
|--|--|
| <p>there is used in 2 ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">To say where something is placed Example: The bank is over there.It is used with 'is' and 'are' Example: There is a hole in my shoe. There are seven days in a week. | <p>two is how you write the number 2</p> <p>Example: I am going away for two nights. I have two dogs.</p> |
| <p>their is used for something that belongs to them</p> <p>Examples: They parked their car outside. Their house is lovely.</p> | <p>too is used in 2 ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Instead of also, or as well Examples: I like apples and I like grapes too. Mary is coming to the cinema too.To say there's more than enough of something. Examples I was too tired so I didn't go out. That coat is too expensive. |
| <p>they're is short for 'they are'</p> <p>Examples: They're coming to see us. I know them, but they're not my friends.</p> | <p>to is used in 2 ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Before an action word Example: I love to sing.To show direction Examples: I am going to a party in town. She gave a card to her friend. |

Fill in the blanks using two, too or to

Last week I had _____ days off. I decided ___ go ___ a hotel in Cork for _____ nights. My friend, Ann, said she would come along _____.

We looked up the cost of staying in a hotel, some of them were just _____ expensive. Finally, we found a lovely hotel that was not _____ costly.

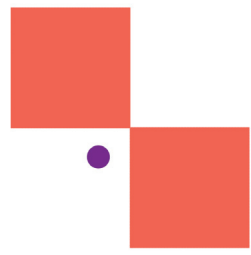
We booked a room with _____ single beds. The cost included breakfast _____.

It was a lovely hotel, it had _____ restaurants and a swimming pool _____. We had a lovely break and I hope it will not be _____ long before we go away again.

Fill in the blanks using there, their or they're.

1. Tell them to hang up _____ coats.
2. Please stand over _____.
3. _____ car is parked outside.
4. _____ is a mouse in the house.
5. _____ great friends.
6. Joe is always _____ on time.
7. They take _____ dog for a walk.
8. Ask them if _____ ready to go.
9. _____ children are all grown up.
10. _____ are 12 months in a year.
11. Tell them to leave _____ dirty boots outside.
12. Can you please leave that _____.

Maths



1.

Anna works 4 hours a day, Monday to Friday.
She works 4 hours on Saturday and 3 hours on Sunday.
She earns €14 per hour, but she gets **time and a half** on Saturday and **double time** on Sunday.

- How many hours does Anna work every week?
- What is her hourly pay on Saturday?
- What is her hourly pay on Sunday?
- How much does Anna earn, before deductions?
- If she pays, PAYE of €90, USC €12 and PRSI €16, what is her take home pay?
- If Anna saves $\frac{1}{5}$ of her take home pay, each week, how much will she save each week?
- How much will she have saved after a year?

Tip : to work out a fraction

Divide by the bottom number
and multiply by the top

Example : $\frac{3}{4}$ of 80

80 divided by 4 = 20

20 x 3 = 60

2.

Paul is saving for a deposit on a house. He needs to have saved €30,000. At the moment he is saving €500 every month.

- How much does Paul save in one year?
- How many years will it take Paul to save €30,000?
- If he increases his savings every month to €800, how much will he save each year?

Answers

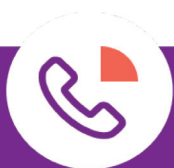
1. a 27 b €21, c €28, d €48 e €330 f €66 g €3,432
2. a. €6000 b. €5 years c. €9,600

Notes



Further help is available

If you need help with these worksheets, or with reading, writing, maths or digital skills, you can contact the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA).



Call us on Freephone **1 800 20 20 80**
or text **LEARN** to **50050**

You can study online on our Learn with NALA website www.learnwithnala.ie or with a tutor over the phone or we can give details of your local centre.



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