



## Longest Day of the Year: Summer Solstice 2021

In the northern **hemisphere**, the summer solstice is nearly upon us!

In the UK, the 21<sup>st</sup> June is the day of the year which has more sunlight hours than all the rest.

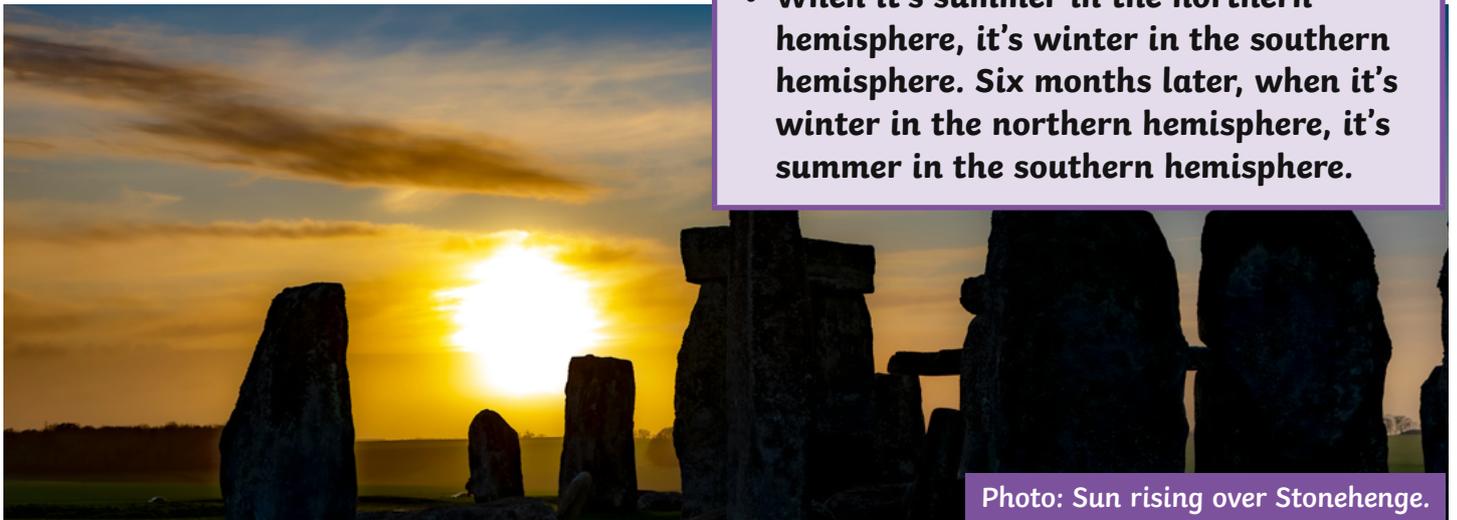


Photo: Sun rising over Stonehenge.

It happens because the Earth is slightly tilted. At this time of year, the North Pole is leaning its most towards the Sun.

So, the further north you go, the more sunshine you get.

In Madrid, they'll be getting just over 15 hours of daylight on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Further north, in London, they'll have over 16 and a half hours of sunlight.

But up in Fairbanks, Alaska, they'll be enjoying nearly 22 hours of sunlight!

In fact, to celebrate the summer solstice in Fairbanks - and make use of all that daylight - they hold the Midnight Sun baseball game.

In the Tirol region of Austria, they celebrate by lighting bonfires on the mountaintops.

Ancient cultures **honoured** the solstice too. If you stand in front of the ancient Egyptian

### Why is it only the summer solstice in the northern hemisphere?

- Because the tilt of the Earth means that the seasons are reversed in the northern and southern hemispheres.
- When it's summer in the northern hemisphere, it's winter in the southern hemisphere. Six months later, when it's winter in the northern hemisphere, it's summer in the southern hemisphere.

monument the Sphinx, you'll see the Sun set precisely between two of the pyramids.

Stonehenge was also built thousands of years ago, yet those stones were placed to **align** with the Sun too.

Whether you do anything special to mark the longest day or not, hopefully, you'll enjoy a little extra sunlight in your day.

### Glossary

- hemisphere** Half the Earth.
- honoured** Treated with respect.
- align** Line up with something else.

### Reflect

If there was actually extra time in the day, how would you spend it?



# Questions

1. Which of the following alternate headlines best summarises the article? **(tick one)**

- Monday Set to Be the Hottest Day of the Year
- All You Need to Know about the Shortest Day of the Year
- Celebrating the Summer Solstice
- Baseball and Bonfires

2. Which of the following facts wasn't included in the article? **(tick one)**

- 21<sup>st</sup> June is the shortest day of the year in Australia.
- The Earth is slightly tilted.
- Stonehenge was built thousands of years ago.
- In parts of Austria, they celebrate the solstice by lighting large fires on mountains.

3. Name one of the places mentioned in the article where people celebrate the summer solstice.

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4. Tick to show whether the statement is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact	Opinion
There are pyramids in Egypt.		
Baseball is a cool sport.		
Pyramids are great.		
A baseball game is played in Alaska to mark the summer solstice.		