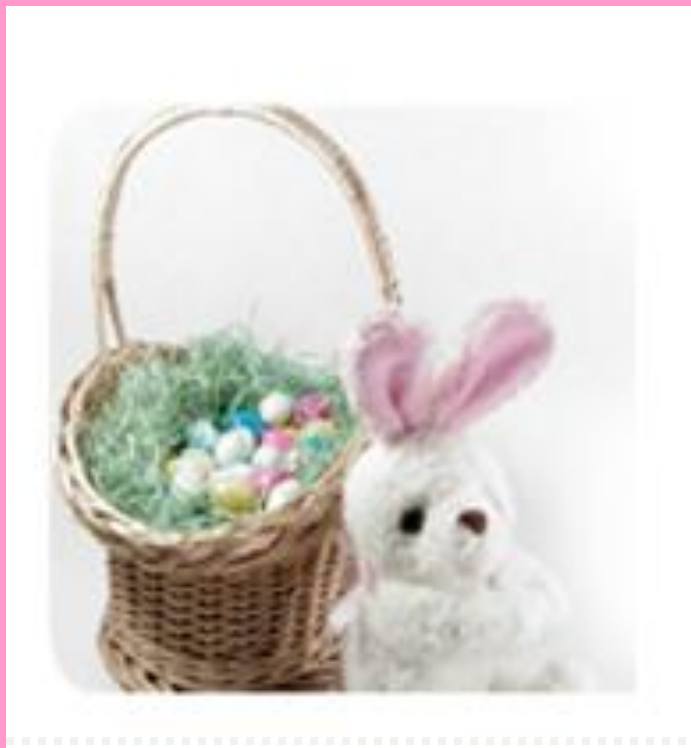


How The Easter Calendar Works

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The Changing Easter Calendar...

Unlike many other holidays, where the date never varies year after year, such as Christmas, or where the date is based on position on the month, such as Thanksgiving celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November, Easter has a date that can be in one of two months and seems to jump around with little meaning. However, a little understanding of how the date is determined will reveal that the Easter calendar does have some rhyme and reason.

Easter Sunday Calendar

Lunar Guidance

In any given year, the date that Easter falls on is determined by the phase of the moon, and has a basis in astronomy. According to the canonical rule, Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday after the 14th day of the lunar month that falls on or later than March 21, which is nominally the day of the vernal or spring equinox. This is termed as the ecclesiastical full moon.

Differences in Calendars

The date that Easter falls on is determined by the vernal equinox, but once again, religious definitions differ from scientific ones. The vernal equinox is determined scientifically by the number of hours in the day, but for religious purposes, this date is fixed as March 21.

Keep in mind that the ecclesiastical full moon does not always coincide with the precise day as the actual full moon. For all intents and purposes, the new moon is considered to be the first appearance of a sliver of moon in the sky after the traditional full moon.

Another reason that Easter will not always fall on the same date each year is that the moon follows a 28 day period, while our months vary from 28 days to 31 days. Because of all these variations, the earliest calendar date that Easter can fall on is March 21 and the latest it will ever be is April 25.

One final twist in the Easter Calendar; there is a difference in the Easter calendar dates of the Catholic and other Western Christian religions and those of the Eastern Orthodox religions. The Catholic Church and Western churches follow a system that uses the Gregorian calendar, which is the calendar we use today, whereas, for religious purposes, the Eastern Orthodox religions use the Julian calendar. These two calendar systems do **not** have exactly the same dates. It's just one more quirk in the complexity of determining the Easter calendar.

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Present day calculations of Western Easter Sunday dates will fall on the following dates:

Easter Sunday Calendar Dates From Year 2000 to 2020

Year	Date
2000	— April 23
2001	— April 15
2002	— March 31
2003	— April 20
2004	— April 11



Year	Date
2005	— March 27
2006	— April 16
2007	— April 8
2008	— March 23
2009	— April 12

Year	Date
2010	— April 4
2011	— April 24
2012	— April 8
2013	— March 31
2014	— April 20



Year	Date
2015	— April 5
2016	— March 27
2017	— April 16
2018	— April 1
2019	— April 21
2020	— April 12