

Features



TOP

Spring Forward to Daylight Savings Time

MARCH 07TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Spring Forward to Daylight Savings Time

*Submitted by
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Stoddard County, Missouri - Twice each year this controversial practice gives rise to various questions: Why do we spring forward and fall back?

Daylight saving time 2014 will begin at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 9, when most U.S. states will spring forward an hour. Time will fall back to standard time again on Sunday, November 2, when DST ends.

But the federal government doesn't require U.S. states or territories to observe daylight saving time, which is why residents of Arizona (except for residents of the Navajo Indian Reservation), Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Marianas Islands won't need to change their clocks this weekend.

Ben Franklin—of "early to bed and early to rise" fame—was apparently the first person to suggest the concept of daylight saving time, according to computer scientist David Prerau, author of the book [Seize the Daylight: The Curious and Contentious Story of Daylight Saving Time](#).

While serving as U.S. ambassador to France in Paris, Ben Franklin wrote of being awakened at 6 a.m. and realizing, to his surprise, that the sun rose far earlier than

he usually did. Imagine the resources that might be saved if he and others rose before noon and burned less midnight oil, Franklin, tongue half in cheek, wrote to a newspaper.

"Franklin seriously realized it would be beneficial to make better use of daylight, but he didn't really know how to implement it," Prerau said.

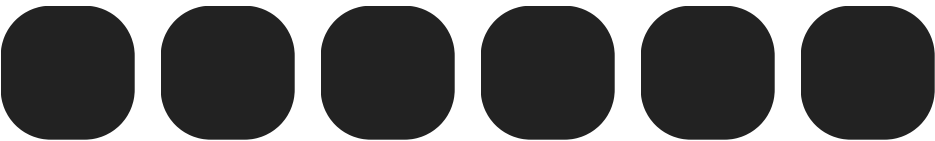
It wasn't until World War I that daylight savings were realized on a grand scale. Germany was the first country to adopt the time changes, to reduce artificial lighting and thereby save coal for the war effort. Friends and foes soon followed suit. In the U.S. a federal law standardized the yearly start and end of daylight saving time in 1918—for the states that chose to observe it.

During World War II the U.S. made daylight saving time mandatory for the whole country, as a way to save wartime resources. Between February 9, 1942, and September 30, 1945, the government took it a step further. During this period DST was observed year-round, essentially making it the new standard time, if only for a few years.

LAST UPDATED ON MARCH 07TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

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