



THE Weaver Wonders

Punxsutawney Phil
Edition

The Groundhog Day Tradition

Groundhog Day festivities might be some of the oddest traditions in North America, and it all revolves around a furry buck-toothed prognosticator. The details behind the history vary from source to source, but according to Dutch and German lore, if a badger or hedgehog saw its shadow on the Christian holiday of Candlemas Day, it predicted a long winter. That tradition followed German immigrants to the United States, and in 1886, the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club was formed, and a groundhog was chosen. One of the first members was a news editor, and the story of Punxsutawney Phil went national.

The first official celebration of Groundhog Day was the following year, and it has grown in popularity ever since, especially after the 1993 Bill Murray movie that highlighted the festivities. Starting before sunrise on February 2nd, the groundhog kicks off the party. Phil emerges from his trunk to a crowd of over 30,000 visitors and millions via live stream. If Phil is scared back into his tree trunk by his shadow, then six more weeks of winter are in the forecast. If he does not see his shadow, then an early spring.



February



What is Groundhog Day?



Groundhog Day is famously connected to weather prediction, with the most prominent tradition involving a groundhog predicting the conclusion of winter by seeing (or not seeing) his own shadow.

According to weather lore:

- **Sees His Shadow:** If the groundhog emerges from his hole on a clear day and sees his shadow, then there will be six more weeks of wintry weather.
- **No Shadow:** If he emerges from his burrow and does not see his shadow, then early spring weather is right around the corner.

Will Phil See His Shadow in 2024?

Early in the morning on February 2, 2024. Punxsutawney Phil, that Weather Prognosticator Extraordinary, will emerge from his hole to make his much anticipated forecast.

According to Groundhog Day predictions, the weather is going to be cloudy skies on February 2, which means that Phil will not see his shadow and will predict an early spring.

But we'll have to wait and see.



Phil's Prior Predictions

1976: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1977: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1978: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1979: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1980: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1981: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1982: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1983: No shadow (early spring)
1984: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1985: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1986: No shadow (early spring)
1987: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1988: No shadow (early spring)
1989: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1990: No shadow (early spring)
1991: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1992: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1993: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1994: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1995: No shadow (early spring)
1996: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1997: No shadow (early spring)
1998: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
1999: No shadow (early spring)
2000: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2001: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2002: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2003: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2004: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2005: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2006: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2007: No shadow (early spring)
2008: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2009: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2010: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2011: No shadow (early spring)
2012: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2013: No shadow (early spring)
2014: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2015: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2016: No shadow (early spring)
2017: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2018: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2019: No shadow (early spring)
2020: No shadow (early spring)
2021: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2022: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)
2023: Saw shadow (six more weeks of winter)



Groundhog Day the Movie

A weather man is reluctantly sent to cover a story about a weather forecasting “rat” (as he calls it). This is his fourth year on the story, and he makes no effort to hide his frustration. On awakening the ‘following’ day, he discovers that it’s Groundhog Day again, and again, and again. First he uses this to his advantage, then comes the realisation that he is doomed to spend the rest of eternity in the same place, seeing the same people do the same thing every day. Now, every February 2, tens of thousands of spectators attend Groundhog Day events in Punxsutawney, a borough that’s home to some 6,000 people. It was immortalized in the 1993 film Groundhog Day, which was actually shot in Woodstock, Illinois.

Groundhog Facts

Also known as woodchucks, groundhogs belong to a group of large ground squirrels known as marmots. They grow up to 25 inches long and can live for 10 years in captivity. According to legend, Punxsutawney Phil is more than 125 years old thanks to the magical punch he imbibes every summer.

Groundhogs spend the winter hibernating in their burrows, significantly reducing their metabolic rate and body temperature, by February, they can lose as much as half their weight.

When they’re out and about, the furry rodents eat plants, wild berries and insects and they don’t mind helping themselves to garden vegetables or agricultural crops.

The First Celebration

In Punxsutawney, 1886 marked the first time that Groundhog Day appeared in the local newspaper. The following year brought the first official trek to Gobbler's Knob. Each year since then has seen a steady increase in participation of the celebration from people all over the world.



Today's Tradition

Today, Groundhog Day remains what it was when the tradition first came to our shores and found its way to Punxsutawney. A day to take everything a little less seriously, and break up the winter monotony.

How Accurate Are Groundhogs?

While sunny winter days are indeed associated with colder, drier air, we probably shouldn't trade in our meteorologists for groundhogs just yet. Studies by the National Climatic Data Center and the Canadian weather service have yielded a dismal success rate of around 50 percent for Punxsutawney Phil.

One Last Thing

If you haven't yet, remember to add Review Insurance Policies to your New Year's Resolutions. If you have any questions or would like to make changes, please feel free to reach out to us.

New Year's Resolutions
1. Review Insurance Policies
2. _____

