

Daylight saving time begins Sunday: Who observes it, will it affect health?

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Time to spring forward! Daylight Saving Time begins the second Sunday of March for most of the U.S. USA TODAY

Editor's note: Part of this story from The Arizona Republic was published in 2017.

The vast majority of Americans will [lose an hour of sleep](#) on Sunday as clocks are set ahead for daylight saving time.

Arizona and Hawaii do not observe daylight saving time, which was [first enacted by the federal government March 19, 1918](#), during World War I as a way to conserve coal. Other non-observers of daylight saving time are American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

While most cellphones and other devices take care of the time change automatically, traditional clocks need to be adjusted manually when the time changes at 2 a.m. Sunday. (Yes, that makes it 3 a.m.)

How daylight saving time messes with your body

Heart attack or stroke. According to a [study](#) led by a University of Colorado fellow in 2014, [when Americans lose one hour of sleep in the spring](#), the risk of heart attack increases 25 percent. When the clock gives back that hour of sleep the risk of heart attack decreases by 21 percent. (The limited study looked at hospital admission data in Michigan over a four-year period.)

Sleep. Gaining or losing an hour probably will affect sleep patterns, often for about five to seven days, said Timothy Morgenthaler, Mayo Clinic's co-director of the Center for Sleep Medicine. The most notable changes are in those who regularly do not get enough sleep. People who are sleep-deprived might struggle with memory, learning, social interactions and overall cognitive performance.

Daylight saving time has some unexpected consequences. Tony Spitz has the details. Buzz60

"People have more changes in how sleepy they feel or how it affects the quality of their sleep when we 'spring forward' than when we 'fall back,'" Morgenthaler said.

The nonprofit Better Sleep Council suggests [going to bed at least 15 minutes](#) earlier than your set bedtime days before the time change.

Daylight saving facts

- Daylight saving was ostensibly started to save energy, but it turned out people enjoyed having an extra hour of daylight after work. But not in Arizona, where sunlight only extends the heat-related misery.
- The Navajo Reservation observes daylight saving time; the Hopi Reservation does not. The Navajo Reservation surrounds the Hopi Reservation, so if on Monday you drive from Flagstaff to Gallup through Tuba City and Ganado, you'll change time on four occasions.
- Western Indiana used to be even more confusing as some counties and cities observed daylight saving while others did not. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 put an end to that, leaving Arizona as the only two-timing state, so to speak.
- On Feb. 9, 1942, Americans set their clocks an hour ahead and kept them there until Sept. 30, 1945. It was officially War Time, with zones reflecting the change (Arizona, for example, was on Mountain War Time).
- China may or may not manipulate its currency, but it does mess with the clock. Though spread over five time zones, China recognizes only one, Beijing time. It is supposed to promote unity, but for those who live in the far west, the summer sun sets as late as midnight.
- If the U.S. observed the one-time-zone policy (Washington, D.C., time, of course), the summer sun in Arizona would set as late as 10:42 p.m.
- In 1991 and again in 2014, a few lawmakers floated the idea of having Arizona join daylight saving time. Republicans and Democrats were united in their rejection of such a proposal.
- Massachusetts officials considered moving the state into the Atlantic Standard Time Zone from the Eastern Time Zone. In effect, Massachusetts would be an hour ahead of the rest of New England, effectively adopting DST year-round.
- More than 70 countries observe daylight saving time. No one is sure just how much daylight is saved, globally, each year, though physics indicates none.

- It is daylight saving time, not daylight savings time. So it is decreed by those who spend inordinate amounts of time policing words.

States consider year-round daylight saving time

In 2017, 26 states considered making daylight saving time permanent, according to Time Zone, a group tracking and promoting the effort.

While ditching daylight saving involves a state merely notifying the Department of Transportation, enacting it year-round is more involved, including approval by Congress. A state can not “permanently” stay on daylight saving time under federal law, the DOT says.

The Florida Legislature voted last year to observe daylight saving time year-round, meaning when the rest of the county moves their clocks back in the fall, Florida wouldn't. Rick Scott, who was the governor, [approved the measure to go into effect on July 1](#), but the move hasn't been approved by Congress.

On Wednesday, Sen. Marco Rubio, Scott, now the junior senator from Florida, and Rep. Vern Buchanan, all Republicans from Florida, introduced the "Sunshine Protection Act" in Congress that would [make daylight saving time permanent across the country](#).

In November, a ballot initiative that proposed authorizing the California Legislature to [reform daylight saving time](#) passed with 60 percent voter approval. State legislators can now vote to keep California permanently on daylight saving time. The policy change will require two-thirds approval in the Legislature, then passage in Congress and a presidential signature.

A month after the election, Assemblyman Kansen Chu, a Democrat from San Jose, California, introduced Assembly Bill 7, which proposed keeping California on daylight saving time year-round.

Chu said he's confident the bill will pass through the state legislature with bipartisan support and two-thirds approval.

“It's going through the process and will hopefully have its first hearing hopefully toward the end of the month,” Chu said.

If the bill passes, California will join Florida, whose legislature passed a similar bill to implement daylight saving time year-round and which now awaits permission from the federal government.

Congress has considered bills to allow states to remain on daylight saving time permanently, but they've stalled before legislators in either the House or Senate

have had the chance to vote on them.

How daylight saving time affects Arizona

When daylight saving time begins Sunday, Arizona will be three hours behind New York, two hours behind Chicago, an hour behind Denver and the same time as Los Angeles.

- Sporting events outside Arizona will start an hour earlier, a welcome change when NCAA's March Madness rolls around (though inconsequential for baseball because who outside of sports reporters watches to the end?).
- Shows will start earlier on some cable TV networks.
- More importantly for Arizona, the sun will set at its normally scheduled time, though in summer it's always way-too-late-thirty. If DST were enforced, the sun would stay up until 8:42 p.m. around the summer solstice, past the bedtime of the average Baby Boomer.

Daylight saving time will end Nov. 3.

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