

The World's Craziest Hoaxes

All over the world people are celebrating the mischievous April Fools' Day! From practical jokes, to world-wide news, everybody knows April 1st is the day for a good laugh and to test your originality on pulling pranks. Below are some ways that people all over have celebrated April Fools' Day.



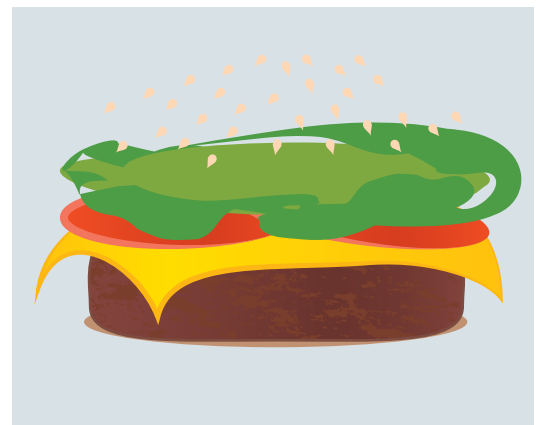
Every year in Istanbul, during the April Fools' Day celebration, over 100,000 pink balloons are let go as part of the celebration!

On April 1, 1996, Taco Bell Corporation took out a full-page ad that appeared in six major newspapers announcing it had bought the Liberty Bell and was renaming it the Taco Liberty Bell. Hundreds of angry citizens complained to the National Historic Park in Philadelphia where the bell was held. A few hours later, Taco Bell proclaimed that it was all a practical joke.



On April 1, 2008, the BBC announced that camera crews filming near the Antarctic had captured footage of penguins flying in the air. It even had a video clip of the penguins. A follow-up video finally told their secret on how the BBC created the special effects of the flying birds.

Burger King put up an ad announcing a new item to their menu, the "Left-Handed Whopper." It was said to be specifically for the 32 million left-handed Americans. The following day Burger King revealed that the Left-Handed Whopper was a prank, though thousands of customers had gone into the restaurant to order the hot new item.



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April 1957: BBC aired a news report about a bountiful spaghetti harvest in Switzerland. The broadcast stated that the disappearance of the spaghetti weevil and a mild winter were both factors in this epic spaghetti harvest. They even showed clips of farmers pulling pasta out of “spaghetti trees”! Thousands of people called in to ask how to grow their own spaghetti tree, and the BBC actually told them to put a “sprig” of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best.

August 2001: The National Geographic’s “Photo of the Year” went viral. It was a photo of a shark jumping out of the water to attack a helicopter. The photo was actually two images spliced together—one U.S. Air Force photo taken near the Golden Gate Bridge, and another photo of a great white shark taken by a South African photographer.

April 1998: In a newsletter put out by New Mexicans for Science and Reason, there was an article titled, “Alabama Legislature Lays Siege to Pi”. The byline said the article was written by April Holiday of the Associated Press, and the story was about the Alabama state legislature voting to change the value of pi to 3. The real author of the article wrote it as a parody of the legislative and school board attacks on teaching evolution in New Mexico schools.

Writing Prompt

Why do you think people enjoy playing tricks on each other?

How is a hoax different from a prank? Do you think one is better or worse than the other?

Flash mobs are a fun way to get a large audience for a prank or gag. Can you think of a funny flash mob you’ve seen? Now Come up with your own flash mob idea! Can it be done at school?
