Labor Day History and Calendar

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Who does Labor Day in the United States honor?
   - A. Workers and their contributions
   - B. The first presidents
   - C. The inventors of the calendar
   - D. The founders of national parks

   Correct answer: A. Workers and their contributions
   The holiday grew from efforts to recognize workers and their contributions to American society.

2. When does the United States observe Labor Day?
   - A. The first Sunday in September
   - B. September 1 every year
   - C. The first Monday in September
   - D. The last Monday in August

   Correct answer: C. The first Monday in September
   Labor Day moves with the calendar because the rule specifies the first Monday of September.

3. Which city held the first U.S. Labor Day celebration in 1882, according to the Library of Congress timeline?
   - A. Boston
   - B. New York City
   - C. Buffalo
   - D. Philadelphia

   Correct answer: B. New York City
   The Library of Congress places the first celebration in New York City on September 5, 1882.

4. Which state was the first to pass a law recognizing Labor Day, in 1887?
   - A. Massachusetts
   - B. New York
   - C. Colorado
   - D. Oregon

   Correct answer: D. Oregon
   New York introduced a bill first, but Oregon passed the first state law recognizing the holiday. The Department of Labor dates the Oregon law to February 21, 1887.

5. In what year did Congress establish Labor Day as a federal public holiday?

A. 1882
B. 1894
C. 1887
D. 1901

Correct answer: B. 1894
The act establishing the federal holiday was approved in 1894. Local celebrations and state recognition had already begun.

6. In a fictional year, September 1 is a Friday. What date is Labor Day in the United States that year?

A. September 4
B. September 1
C. September 3
D. September 11

Correct answer: A. September 4
After Friday the first come Saturday the second and Sunday the third. Monday the fourth is the first Monday in September.

7. Which organization planned the New York City Labor Day celebration on September 5, 1882?

A. American Federation of Labor
B. U.S. Department of Labor
C. Library of Congress
D. Central Labor Union

Correct answer: D. Central Labor Union
The Central Labor Union planned the local celebration. The Library of Congress timeline identifies it as the organizer.

8. The first New York City celebration was in 1882. Congress established the federal holiday in 1894. By how many calendar years do the two year numbers differ?

A. 7 years
B. 5 years
C. 12 years
D. 22 years

Correct answer: C. 12 years
Subtract 1882 from 1894 to get 12. This compares the calendar years of the events.

9. Which schedule do Canada’s Labour Day and the U.S. Labor Day share?

A. The first Monday in September
B. May 1 every year
C. The first Friday in September
D. September 5 every year

Correct answer: A. The first Monday in September
The Government of Canada designated its Labour Day for the first Monday of September, the same calendar rule used in the United States.

10. A fictional archive has a flyer printed before an early Labor Day parade. It gives the planned meeting place and asks workers to attend. What can this flyer directly establish?

A. The flyer created a federal holiday.
B. The parade occurred exactly as scheduled.
C. Every worker who received the flyer attended.
D. Someone invited workers to a parade at a stated meeting place.

Correct answer: D. Someone invited workers to a parade at a stated meeting place.
An invitation records plans and who was asked to attend. Records made after the event could provide evidence about what actually happened.

11. A curator preparing a museum caption finds two accounts of Labor Day’s founding. One credits Peter J. McGuire and another credits Matthew Maguire. Which wording best reflects the evidence?

A. McGuire and Maguire are two spellings of the same person’s name.
B. The records agree that Peter J. McGuire was the sole founder.
C. Both men have been credited with proposing the holiday, and the attribution is disputed.
D. The disagreement proves that neither person advocated the holiday.

Correct answer: C. Both men have been credited with proposing the holiday, and the attribution is disputed.
The Department of Labor discusses the competing claims about two people. A caption can present both accounts without treating either as settled.

12. The Library of Congress Labor Day guide describes a photograph of a parade on Main Street in Buffalo and dates it to about 1901. Which label stays closest to that evidence?

A. The first Labor Day parade in New York City, 1882
B. Labor Day parade in Buffalo, around 1901
C. Buffalo parade on a precisely known day in 1901
D. The ceremony where the 1894 federal act was approved

Correct answer: B. Labor Day parade in Buffalo, around 1901
The guide identifies the Buffalo location and gives an approximate year. That description does not establish an exact day.

13. In fictional Year A, September 1 is a Tuesday. In fictional Year B, September 1 is a Sunday. On what September dates does U.S. Labor Day fall in Years A and B, respectively?

A. September 6 and September 2
B. September 1 and September 1
C. September 7 and September 8
D. September 7 and September 2

Correct answer: D. September 7 and September 2
When September starts on a Tuesday, the first Monday is the seventh. When September starts on a Sunday, the next day is Monday the second.

14. A reader finds that the Labor Day act was approved on June 28, 1894, but that the act names a date in September. Which explanation reconciles those details?

A. June 28 was the approval date. The annual observance was set for the first Monday in September.
B. The act set a June holiday and Congress added September later in 1894.
C. The act must have been approved in September because the holiday falls in September.
D. The act created two separate annual Labor Day holidays.

Correct answer: A. June 28 was the approval date. The annual observance was set for the first Monday in September.
The date at the end of the act records its approval. The text sets the first Monday of September as the annual observance.

15. A curator compares the 1894 federal act with a Buffalo parade photograph the Library of Congress dates to about 1901. Which conclusion can the two sources support together?

A. Congress required every U.S. city to hold a Labor Day parade.
B. The recorded Buffalo parade was the first Labor Day celebration in the United States.
C. Congress established the federal observance, and a later parade was documented in Buffalo.
D. Every Buffalo worker attended the photographed parade.

Correct answer: C. Congress established the federal observance, and a later parade was documented in Buffalo.
The act establishes the federal observance. The photograph documents a particular later local event. Neither shows that parades were required or that every worker attended.