

EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

HOW TO FEEL GOOD ALL OVER
HOME TREATMENTS FOR SORENESS AND PAIN
HOMEMADE MAC AND CHEESE RECIPES!

POP 'EM FRESH!



APRIL 2021

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If you love popcorn (and who doesn't?), you really ought to grow your own.

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WHAT'S NEXT

See what we have in store for our May issue!

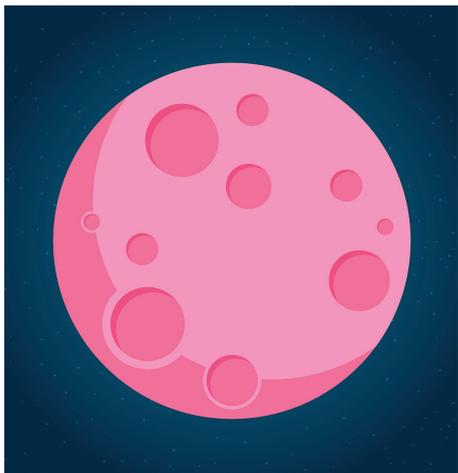


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APRIL

Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More



EYE ON THE SKY

APRIL'S FULL MOON NAMES

Pink Moon; also Breaking Ice Moon, Frog Moon, and Moon When the Ducks Come Back

MOON PHASES

Last Quarter: Apr. 4, 6:02 A.M. EDT

New Moon: Apr. 11, 10:31 P.M. EDT

First Quarter: Apr. 20, 2:59 A.M. EDT

Full Moon: Apr. 26, 11:32 P.M. EDT



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT APRIL'S FULL MOON

*I have found violets.
April hath come on,
And the cool winds feel softer,
and the rain
Falls in the beaded drops of
summer-time.
. . . and so I know
That Nature, with her
delicate ear, hath heard
The dropping of the velvet
foot of Spring.*

—Nathaniel Parker Willis,
American writer (1806–67)

A MONTH TO REMEMBER

“April” comes from the Latin word *aperio*, meaning “to open (bud),” because plants begin to grow now.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Apr. 1: All Fools’ Day

Apr. 2: Good Friday

Apr. 4: Easter

Apr. 5: Easter Monday

Apr. 12: Ramadan begins at sundown

Apr. 22: Earth Day

Apr. 30: National Arbor Day



BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These April dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

PERSONAL

Advertise to sell: 12–14

Ask for a loan: 8, 9

Begin diet to lose weight: 9, 27

Begin diet to gain weight: 14, 23

Buy a home: 12–14

Color hair: 12–14

Cut hair to discourage growth:
9, 10

Cut hair to encourage growth:
12–14

Get married: 24, 25

Have dental care: 22, 23

Move (house/household): 15–17

Perm hair: 5–7



Quit smoking: 9, 27
Straighten hair: 1, 2, 28, 29
Travel for pleasure: 20, 21
Wean children: 9, 27

AROUND THE HOUSE

Bake: 18, 19
Brew: 26, 27
Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut:
8, 9
Demolish: 26, 27
Dry fruit/vegetables/meat: 1, 2
End projects: 10
Lay shingles: 20, 21
Make jams/jellies: 8, 9
Paint: 24, 25
Start projects: 12
Wash floors: 8, 9
Wash windows: 10, 11

OUTDOORS

Begin logging: 3, 4, 30
Go camping: 1, 2, 28, 29
Go fishing: 11–26
Set posts or pour concrete: 3, 4, 30

IN THE GARDEN

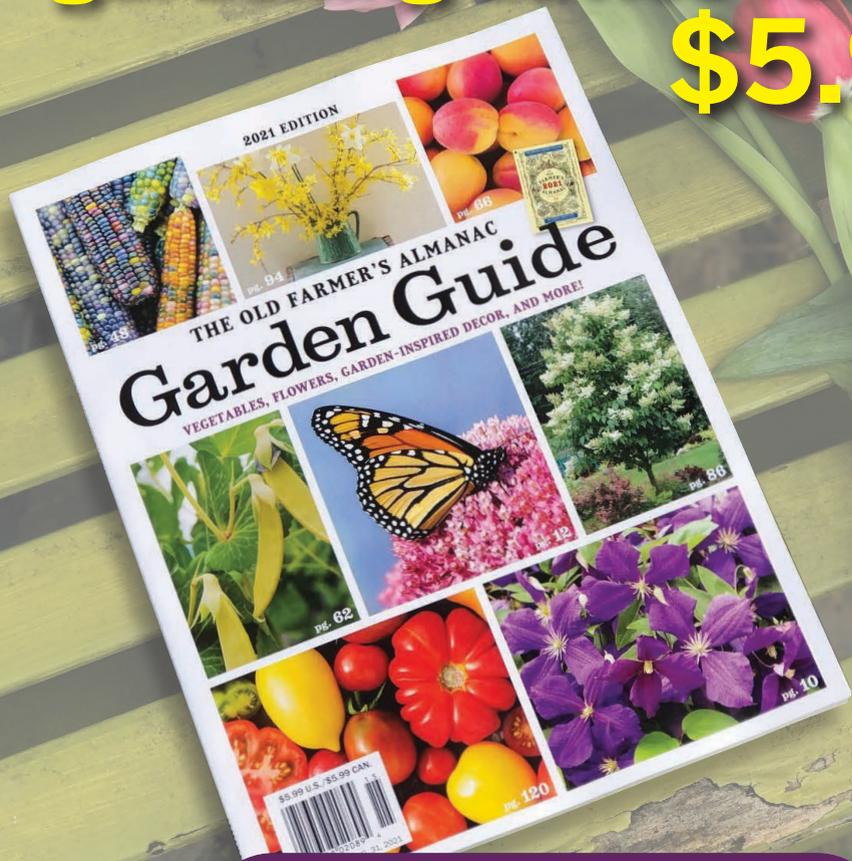
Destroy pests and weeds: 10, 11
Graft or pollinate: 18, 19
Harvest aboveground crops: 12–14
Harvest belowground crops: 3, 4,
30
Mow to slow growth: 10, 27
Mow to promote growth: 12–14
Pick fruit: 22, 23
Plant aboveground crops: 18, 19
Plant belowground crops: 8, 9
Prune to discourage growth: 1, 2,
10
Prune to encourage growth: 20, 21

ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 26, 27
Castrate animals: 5–7
Cut hay: 10, 11
Purchase animals: 18, 19
Set eggs: 5, 24, 25
Slaughter livestock: 26, 27
Wean animals: 9, 27

The 2021 Garden Guide is here!

A bounty of useful gardening advice for just **\$5.99!**



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GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the April dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces, or Taurus

HARVEST: Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS: Capricorn

CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED: Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

PRUNE: Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN APRIL

1 Sagittarius	9 Pisces	17 Gemini	25 Libra
2 Sagittarius	10 Aries	18 Cancer	26 Scorpio
3 Capricorn	11 Aries	19 Cancer	27 Scorpio
4 Capricorn	12 Taurus	20 Leo	28 Sagittarius
5 Aquarius	13 Taurus	21 Leo	29 Sagittarius
6 Aquarius	14 Taurus	22 Virgo	30 Capricorn
7 Aquarius	15 Gemini	23 Virgo	
8 Pisces	16 Gemini	24 Libra	



TAP FOR
MERCURY IN
RETROGRADE
DATES



TAP FOR
APRIL MOON
PHASES

MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

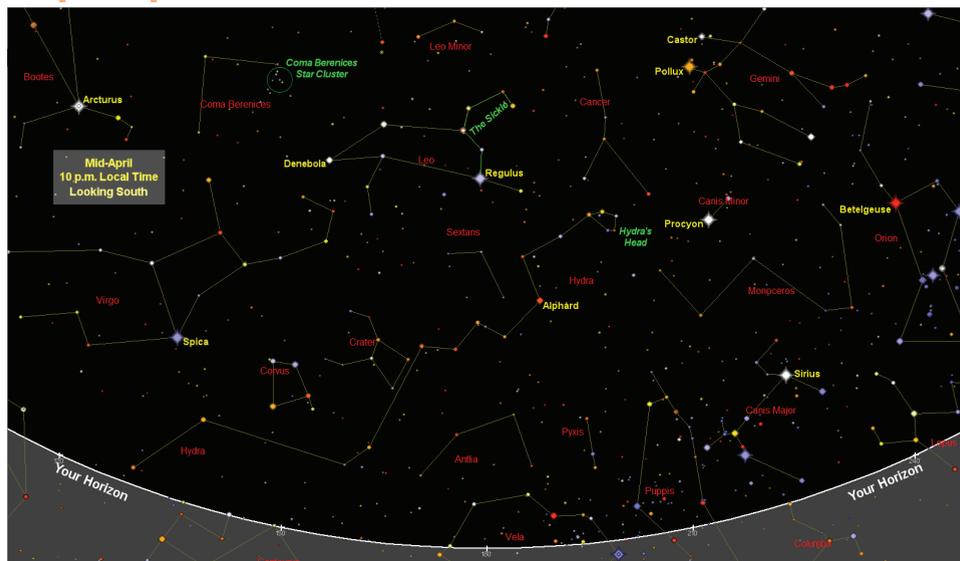
Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion *retrograde motion*.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

Mercury's remaining 2021 retrograde periods are **May 29–June 22** and **September 27–October 17**.

—Celeste Longacre



THE MINOR LEAGUERS

With the start of baseball season upon us, this seems an appropriate time to look at constellations that haven't made the Big Leagues. These are the night sky's lesser lights, constellations that are either too small or too faint to make the celestial all-star team. To maximize your ability to see the Minor Leaguers, choose a moonless night during April and a viewing location as far as possible from city lights.

First, let's get our bearings. When you look to the south on April evenings, mighty Leo, the Lion, dominates the scene. The most distinctive part of Leo is the Sickle asterism, a pattern of six stars anchored by Regulus, the 21st brightest star in the night sky. Once you've spotted the Sickle, you should have little trouble tracing out the rest of Leo, culmination with bright Denebola, whose name comes from an Arabic phrase meaning "tail of the lion."

With Leo clearly in view, we can now make our way to the

 TAP TO GET
A PRINTABLE
APRIL SKY MAP

 TAP TO
FOLLOW
OHIOAN JEFF
DETRAY'S SKY
ADVENTURES



first few Minor Leaguers. Just above Leo lies the Smaller Lion, Leo Minor. You'll have to make good use of your imagination, because only three of Leo Minor's stars are easily visible, arranged in a much-flattened triangle. Moving to the east (leftward), we find Coma Berenices, Berenice's Hair, named for Queen Berenice of ancient Egypt. It seems Berenice pledged to cut her long, flowing hair if her husband, King Ptolemy III, returned safely from battle. When he did, Berenice lopped off her golden locks, and astronomers of the time declared that they would be forever preserved in the night sky.

Like Leo Minor, Coma Berenices consists of just three main stars. However, the constellation is also home to the Coma Berenices Star Cluster, which is highlighted on our map. With your eyes alone, you will see only about five stars in the cluster, but even small binoculars will reveal several more.

Continuing downward, past the large constellation Virgo, we come to the compact figures of Corvus, the Crow, and Crater, the Cup. Corvus is an ancient constellation, dating back to at least 1100 B.C., when it was known to the Babylonians as The Raven. Its four main stars form an asterism that is easy to spot, even though it bears scant resemblance to a crow. Crater is much fainter but equally old, and it does actually resemble its namesake.

To the upper right of Crater and directly below Regulus is Sextans, the Sextant, one of the least impressive constellations of all. It's another three-star constellation, but unlike very ancient Corvus and Crater, Sextans is a modern invention. It was first designated as a constellation in 1687 by noted Polish astronomer Johannes Hevelius.

Slithering beneath the small constellations Corvus, Crater, and Sextans is Hydra, the Water Snake. Hydra is the largest of all constellations, an impressive meandering figure that spans nearly one-quarter of the sky, from its head high in the south to its tail near the eastern horizon. This constellation has been recognized since very ancient times, despite being home to only one bright star, Alphard, known as "The Solitary One."

Hydra seems to be meandering westward toward Monoceros, the Unicorn, a faint W-shape grouping that will require you to have dark skies if you are to see it at all. The final Minor Leaguer in this part of the sky is Cancer, the Crab, which sits just above the head of Hydra and directly to the right of the Sickle, where we began our journey.

—Jeff DeTray



GARDENING

Pop 'Em Fresh!

If you love popcorn (and who doesn't?), you really ought to grow your own.

PHOTO: THOMASLENN/GETTY IMAGES

Popcorn is available in a surprising number of varieties (gold, off-white, maroon, black, and calico, to name a few), each with a unique flavor. Experiment to find your favorite, using these tips from popcorn farmers and breeders.

Once all threat of frost has passed, plant seeds 2 to 3 inches deep every foot or so in rows about 30 inches apart. Fertilize with a 17-17-17 formula; popping corn requires a bit more nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulfur than other crops.

Kernels mature in about 80 to 150 days, depending on the variety, but look to the kernels, not the calendar, to know when your crop is ready. There are two ways to harvest popcorn: (1) Pick it when it's sufficiently dried out and ready to be popped. Stalks and husks should be brown and the kernels should be at a moisture level of about 14

percent. (Ears left on the stalk will dry out in the field, losing about one-half a percent of moisture each day. Kernels are protected from rain by the husk, although the higher humidity level in the air after rainfall may raise the moisture level.) Or (2) pick it earlier and then dry it out.

Here are three ways to tell if the kernels are ready:

- **Twist and snap an ear off a stalk.** The ear should be firm, not pliable.
- **Grip the ear with both hands and twist it,** moving your hands in opposite directions. Dry kernels will fall off easily.
- **Press on a kernel with your fingernail.** You will not be able to leave a mark on a dry kernel.

When these conditions are met, the corn is ready to be picked and probably dry enough to be popped.

If you want to harvest ears with a slightly higher moisture level

than 14 percent and dry it, try this test: Pry a kernel off an ear. Hold up the pointed end and scratch away the tip. A black layer there is a sign that the corn is mature. The ears can be picked.

Do not leave corn on the plant if the stalks are falling over, if freezing weather is forecast, or if it is time to plow the garden under.

CURING

To dry out your ears after they've been picked, carefully strip away the husks. Place the ears in mesh bags to hang or spread them out in a well-ventilated area (e.g., a garage or basement) at about 70°F and 70 percent humidity.

No matter your drying method, check the moisture level before shelling the entire crop. The goal is a 14 percent level of moisture; more (too wet) or less (too dry), and the corn won't pop well. If the kernels are too firmly attached



or if they tear loose at the black layer, it is over the 14 percent moisture level. The moisture level is right when the kernels shell off easily: Take an ear in each hand and press and rub the ears together. Removing kernels by hand is the gentlest way to shell.

POP QUIZ

A simple way to test popcorn for dryness is to drop about 20 kernels into hot cooking oil. Popcorn kernels that are too moist make dull, low-pitched popping sounds, and the flakes are round and chewy. Many

moist kernels will not pop but instead just split open. Kernels that are too dry sound like twigs snapping, and the flakes are small or nonexistent; many dry kernels don't pop at all. Suitably dry kernels will pop out white and fluffy.

Sample a few kernels every week, until you get the desired result.

After all of this work, pop some corn for fun and enjoy it—but save some for later. Freshly picked popcorn will not pop as good as popcorn that is 2 months old. It takes time for the moisture to evenly

distribute throughout the kernel. Put your kernels in airtight plastic bags and store them in the freezer. Before popping some, let the kernels warm up to room temperature.

If, over time, your corn stops popping, it's probably too dry. Here's a fix: Add 2 teaspoons of water to a quart of unpoped corn in an airtight container or plastic bag and shake it vigorously. Let it stand for 3 days. The corn will pop well again.

—Stacey Kusterbeck



How to Feel Good All Over

Whether you've got a headache, a stuffed sinus, a burn on the roof of your mouth, a hacking cough, hiccups, a swollen joint, or a blood blister, one of these simple solutions should help you to get back into tip-top shape. Let's start at the top!

HOME REMEDIES

FROM THE TOP OF YOUR HEAD . . .

Feel a headache coming on? Pinch yourself. Specifically, put the squeeze on the webbed area between the thumb and first finger of either hand. Hold it for 30 seconds. Pressure applied here will stimulate nerve impulses to the brain and relax blood vessel dilation. Your headache won't have a chance to settle in.

TO YOUR NOSE . . .

When your head feels under pressure and your nose is all stuffed up and even your teeth hurt, you don't have a common cold. You have a sinus infection. To get relief, mix 1/2 teaspoon of salt into 1 cup of water. (Use cool water if you're stuffed up but have no discharge. If the mucus is thick, use warm water to help liquefy it.) Bring the mixture into the shower. Turn on the hot water

and let it hit your face for 3 to 5 minutes. Hot water helps to liquefy and drain the mucus. Now pour some salt water into a cupped hand and inhale, so that the water goes up your nose. This alleviates irritation, washes out the mucus, and kills bacteria. Spit out what goes down into your throat and gargle with the rest of the salt water to clear your throat. You can do this snorting/gargling routine up to four times a day.

TO YOUR MOUTH . . .

Who hasn't had their mouth burned by a hot piece of pizza? To relieve that singed skin, put equal amounts of water and hydrogen peroxide in a glass. Take a sip and swish the solution around in your mouth. The mixture helps to dissolve dead tissue, and its fizziness is soothing. To avoid the chance of upsetting

your stomach or getting minor heartburn, spit out the solution instead of swallowing it. Seltzer also works. It won't kill bacteria, but it's soothing, and you can swallow it without worry.

TO YOUR THROAT . . .

A quick, easy way to quiet a dry, hacking cough is to chew gingerroot. Cut off a quarter-inch piece, trim off the peel, and put the ginger into your mouth. Chew it slowly; the juice will feel hot in the mouth and throat, and the cough will be gone in a minute. The ginger brings blood to the throat and helps to soothe it. When you've finished chewing, spit out the pulp.

TO YOUR CHEST . . .

We can never have too many remedies for hiccups, so here's one more. Swallow a teaspoonful of dry sugar. The sugar will suck

HOME REMEDIES



water from the tissue in the back of your throat, stimulating nerves that relax your diaphragm, which is in spasm.

TO YOUR JOINTS . . .

Square ice cubes never sit quite right on swollen wrists, ankles, and other body parts, so make your own flexible cold pack. Fill a resealable plastic bag with three parts water and one part rubbing alcohol and put

it into the freezer. The mixture will form into a slushy compound that will conform to any part of the body. When the swelling goes down, pop the bag back into the freezer till the next time. (There's always a next time!)

TO THE TIPS OF YOUR TOES.

When a painful blood blister forms under a fingernail or toenail, get

a small metal paper clip (not a plastic-coated one) and straighten out one end of it. Light a match and, while holding the clip with a pair of tweezers or pliers, heat the straightened end. Touch the hot metal tip to the surface of the nail just above the half-moon, so that it goes through. The blood will drain, and relief will be yours.

—Steve Calechman



Homemade Mac and Cheese Recipes!

Homemade macaroni and cheese is so much better than boxed. And when you make it in your own kitchen you can spice it up, add in some veggies, or just leave it to its gooey, creamy self. These homemade mac and cheese recipes are a guaranteed hit with anyone who takes a bite!

FOOD

Grace Costa's South Indian-Style Mac and Cheese

PHOTO: BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER

GRACE COSTA'S SOUTH INDIAN-STYLE MAC AND CHEESE

1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs	1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
1/4 cup grated Asiago cheese	3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/2 teaspoon paprika	1-1/2 teaspoons ginger garlic paste (see Note)
8 ounces elbow macaroni	3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon garam masala	3 cups milk (not skim)
1/2 teaspoon salt	2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper	
1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric	

Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously grease a 2-quart casserole.

In a bowl, combine bread crumbs, Asiago, and paprika. Set aside.

Cook macaroni al dente, according to package directions. Drain and put into prepared casserole.

In another bowl, combine garam masala, salt, pepper, turmeric, and cayenne. Set aside.

In a saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Add ginger garlic paste as butter is melting. (If added to hot butter, paste will spatter wildly; heat slowly in melting butter.) Add spice mixture and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Add flour and cook for 1 to 2 minutes over medium heat. Add milk slowly, stirring constantly until mixture boils for at least 1 minute, or until incorporated. Remove from heat and fold in shredded cheese.

Pour sauce over cooked macaroni and stir gently to combine. Sprinkle with bread crumbs mixture. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until bubbly.

Makes 6 servings.

Note: Ginger garlic paste provides the background flavor of many South Indian dishes. It can be purchased at Indian grocery stores or made at home by using one-third fresh garlic to two-thirds fresh ginger by weight. Process in a food processor, using as little water as necessary to make a paste. Refrigerated, it will keep for at least a week.



**Sweet Potato
Mac and Cheese
With Roasted Garlic**

SWEET POTATO MAC AND CHEESE WITH ROASTED GARLIC

10 cloves garlic, peeled	3 cups half-and-half
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided	2 cups shredded Italian blend cheese, divided
1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/4 inch thick	3/4 cup shredded Asiago cheese, divided
12 ounces elbow macaroni	pinch of rosemary
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter	3 cloves garlic, minced
4 tablespoons all-purpose flour	1/4 cup Italian panko bread crumbs
1/2 teaspoon salt	
1/8 teaspoon black pepper	

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter a 2-quart baking dish.

Place peeled garlic on a sheet of aluminum foil, coat with 2 tablespoons of olive oil, and wrap tightly. Roast for 20 minutes, or until golden. Remove from foil, mash, and set aside.

Place sweet potatoes in a pot of water and bring to a boil. Cook for 6 minutes, or until fork tender.

In a skillet over medium heat, warm 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add sweet potatoes and cook until caramelized. Remove from skillet and dice into cubes.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add macaroni. Cook for 8 minutes, stirring often. Drain, transfer pasta to a bowl, then set aside.

In the same pot, melt butter over low heat. Add flour, stirring constantly for 3 minutes. Add salt and pepper and whisk in half-and-half. Increase heat to medium and allow mixture to boil. Turn off heat and add 1-3/4 cups Italian blend cheese and 1/2 cup Asiago cheese. Whisk until smooth, then add mashed garlic, sweet potatoes, rosemary, minced garlic, and pasta. Stir to combine, then pour into prepared baking dish.

In a bowl, combine bread crumbs with remaining cheeses and olive oil. Sprinkle over macaroni mixture and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until bubbling and golden brown.

Makes 6 servings.



FOOD

Super-Creamy Mac and Cheese

PHOTO: BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER

SUPER-CREAMY MAC AND CHEESE

- 6 ounces elbow macaroni
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, divided
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups milk, divided
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
- 1 teaspoon salt
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 cups shredded extra sharp cheddar cheese
- 3 ounces cream cheese, cut into pieces, softened
- 3/4 to 1 cup fine cracker crumbs or panko bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter a large casserole dish.

Prepare noodles according to the package directions. Drain, transfer to a large bowl, drizzle with oil, and toss to avoid clumping.

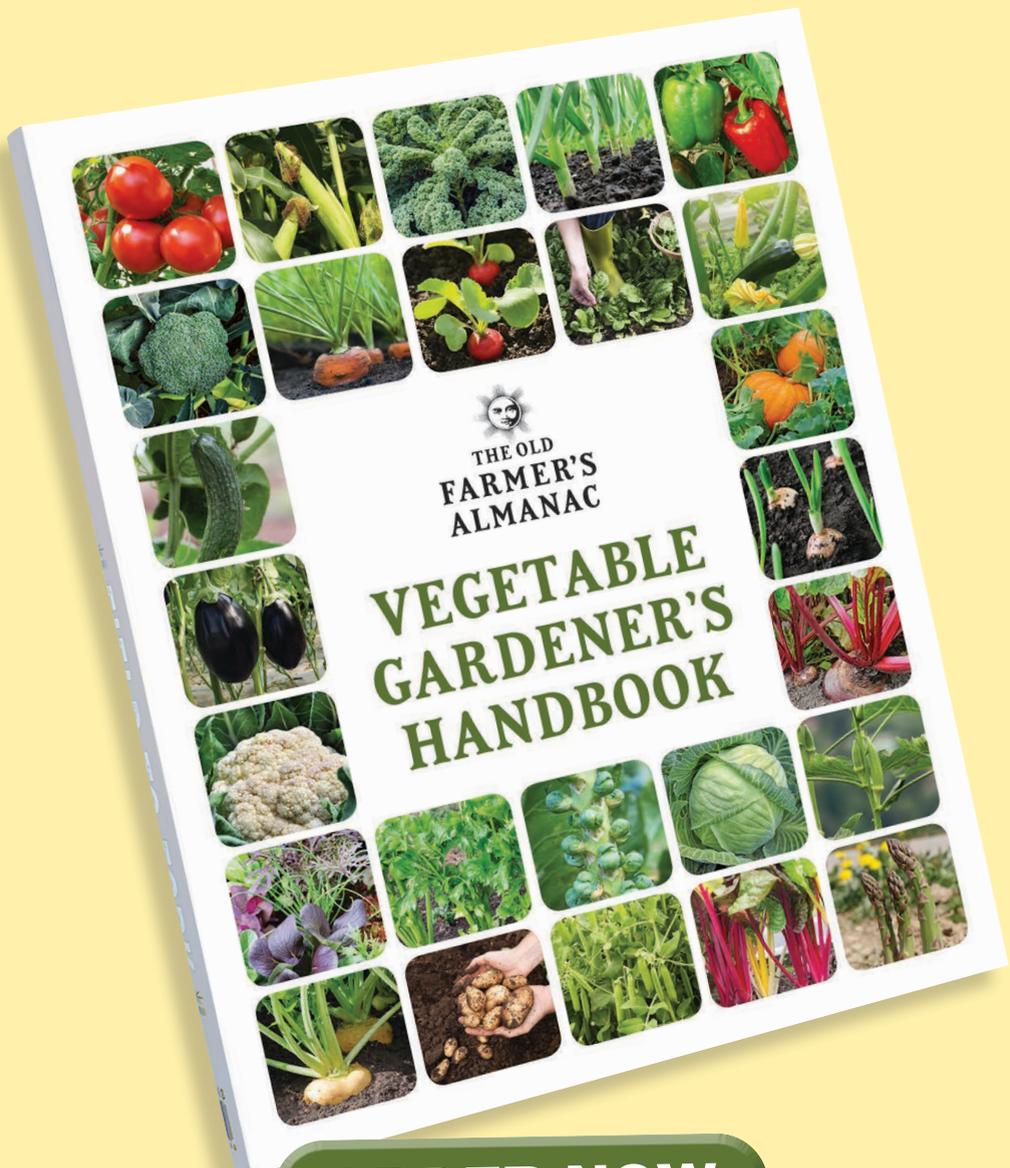
In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt 3 tablespoons of butter. Add onion and cook for 5 minutes, or until soft. Add flour and cook for 1 minute more, stirring. Add 1 cup of milk and stir. As sauce thickens, add remaining 1 cup of milk. Bring to a simmer. Add chicken stock and heat gently for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring constantly. Add mustard, salt, and pepper. Add cheddar, 1 cup at a time, and stir. Add more as it melts. Add cream cheese and stir until melted.

Pour sauce over noodles and stir to coat. Transfer mixture to the casserole dish. Sprinkle with cracker crumbs to cover evenly.

In a pan over low heat, melt remaining 3 tablespoons of butter and drizzle over the crumbs. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until bubbly.

Makes 6 servings.

The perfect companion for every vegetable gardener!



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LIVING NATURALLY



Home Treatments for Soreness and Pain

Should you use cold or heat on your body aches?

PHOTO: SISOJE/GETTY IMAGES

Nothing eases everyday pains, strains, aches, and bruises like cold and heat. But which conditions respond to heat therapy and which to cold therapy?

As someone who spent many midlife years running in summer triathlons and who enjoys a physically demanding, self-reliant rural life, I count heat and cold among my most important first-aid remedies.

Strained muscles, Achilles tendinitis, tennis elbow (I got mine from a day of tossing cordwood off a wood-splitting machine), big bruises, bumps on the head—I've known 'em all. Advancing age has brought painful arthritis in knees, neck, back, elbows, wrists, thumbs, and fingers.

But when do you use heat and when do you use cold? Let's review which is best—and learn how to make an easy cold pack and heat pack, too.

WHEN TO USE COLD THERAPY (ICE)

Use cold to treat an acute injury with swelling—sprains, bumps, bruises, tendinitis. Cold numbs the nerves and constricts the blood vessels, reducing swelling and tissue breakdown and easing pain. (It also works for temporarily reducing under-eye puffiness.)

The time-honored cold pack for a sprain or a fresh, swollen bruise is a bag of frozen corn or peas. The bag conforms to the injured part and treats the injury—and then you eat the thawed vegetables for supper.

In winter, I've stuffed a plastic bag with snow. I've also frozen water in a paper cup, torn back the top of the cup, and massaged the injured part with the ice. Slow, circular massaging movements help to prevent frostbite that can occur from continuous application.

Endurance athletes

sometimes hasten recovery by immersing their entire bodies in an ice bath.

WHEN TO USE HEAT THERAPY

Heat is for more chronic, long-lasting aches and pains.

Nothing soothes muscle tension or arthritis like a heat pack. Gentle heat opens blood vessels to improve blood supply to an area and helps to stretch tight muscles.

Don't use heat (or provide it to someone else for use) on open/recent wounds or swollen areas. Before treating with heat, consult a health professional if you have a skin condition, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, or a vascular disease.

Relief for Dry, Irritated, Tired Eyes

A warm, moist compress also helps to ease dry, irritated, tired eyes at the end of the day. Massage gently downward over



the lids to stimulate the production of both tears and the oils that help to prevent tear evaporation.

HOMEMADE THERMAL PACKS

Reusable Cold Pack

You can make your own reusable cold packs in a jiffy: Just fill a long, 100 percent cotton sock with rice, small beans, flax seed, dried corn kernels, or other hard seed or grain produce, leaving enough space to tie a knot. Keep a couple on hand in the freezer.

Reusable Heat Packs

For a DIY heat pack, fill a cotton sock with

seeds. Toss it into the microwave for about 2 minutes or into the oven until it's warm to the touch.

If you're handy with a sewing machine, you can make a cover of any size and shape to fill with seeds.

A zippered opening will allow you to remove the seeds and wash the cover.

I have a large, seed-filled "cape" that drapes over my shoulders, upper back, and chest, with a short collar that comes up around my neck. Mmmm! Heavenly heat after a long day hunched over a computer or splitting wood.

Using a Cold or Heat Pack

If you plan to leave a cold pack or hot pack in place, keep a piece of flannel or a thin towel between you and the pack to protect your skin from injury. Medical professionals recommend leaving a cold or hot pack in place for no more than 10 to 15 minutes before removing it and waiting half an hour before reapplying.

—Margaret Boyles



TAP TO READ MORE OF MARGARET BOYLES'S POSTS IN HER "LIVING NATURALLY" BLOG



MOIST APRIL, CLEAR JUNE.

HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

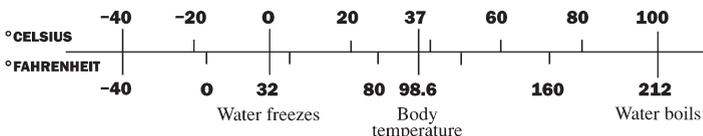
We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Most-recent tabulations span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY

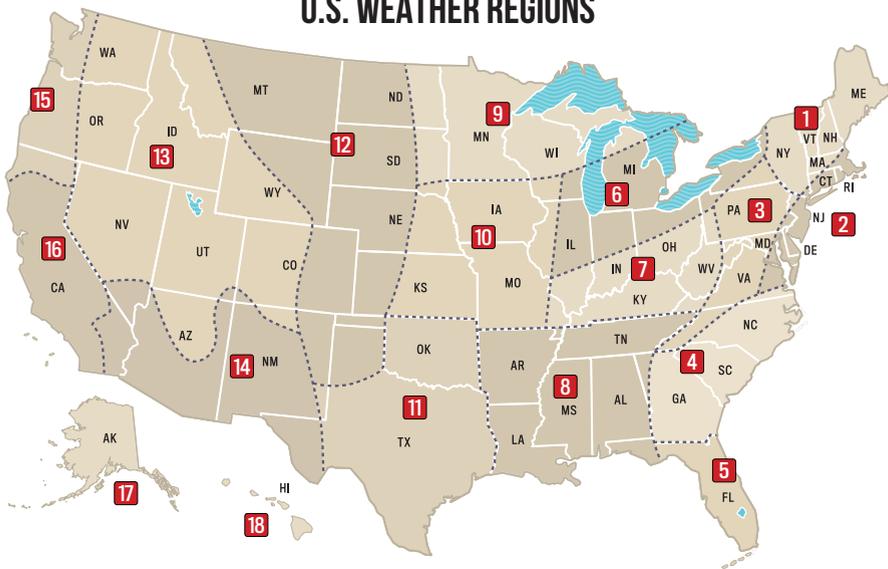


LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

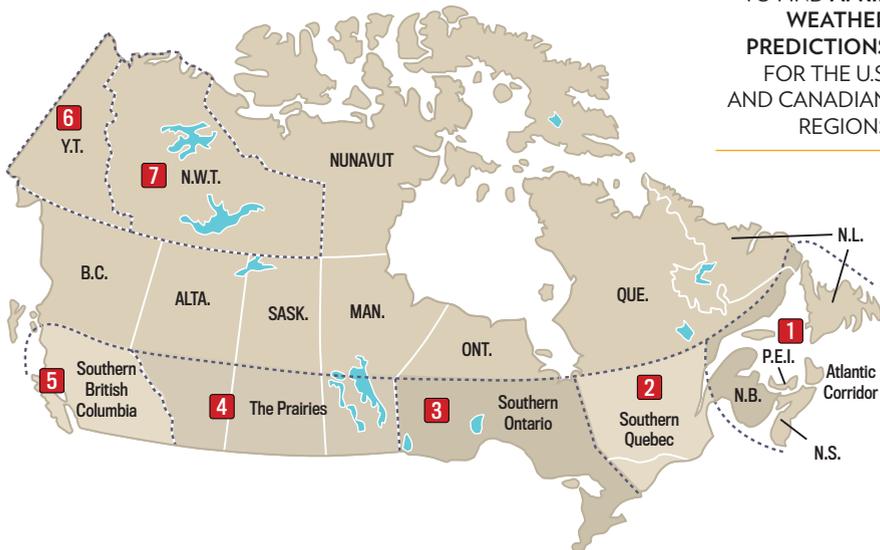


WEATHER FORECASTS

U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



[CLICK HERE TO FIND APRIL WEATHER PREDICTIONS FOR THE U.S. AND CANADIAN REGIONS](#)





SPRING IS HERE—NO FOOLIN’!

On April 1, we expect a massive blizzard to bring all of the United States and Canada to a complete standstill. Only kidding—April Fool! We really don’t expect any extreme weather on this day.

Most areas will have sunshine or scattered showers for Easter Sunday churchgoing and parades on April 4, with seasonable temperatures expected, although there will be some snow in Alaska and northern Canada.

Earth Day, April 22, will bring rainy periods and cool temperatures to most of the eastern states and provinces, with dry weather and mild to warm temperatures in most central and western areas.

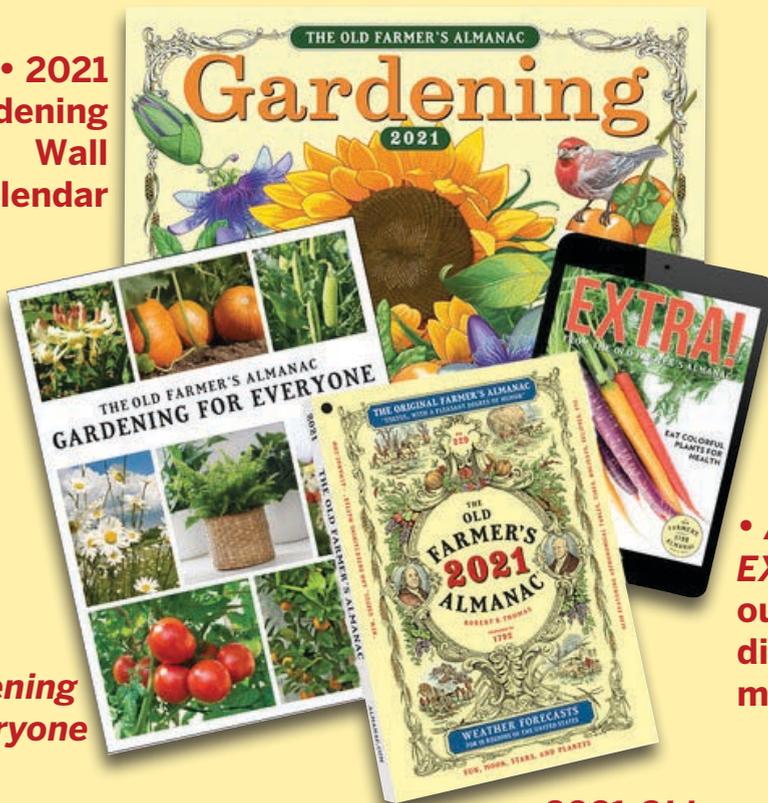
Perhaps the most important day of the year will arrive on April 24, when we celebrate the 255th birthday of *Old Farmer’s Almanac* founder Robert B. Thomas with rainy, cool weather in most of the eastern and central United States and Canada and sunny, mild weather in most western areas. I hope that you enjoy the celebrations and festivities as much as I will. Now, that is one old farmer, to be sure.

April 30 is Arbor Day, when trees will get some needed rain in most areas, with chlorophyll-activating sunshine predominating in the Appalachians, Upper Midwest, Deep South, and Canadian Prairies.

Overall, April will feature above-normal temperatures, on average, in most areas, with cooler-than-normal temps in the United States limited to the High Plains, Desert Southwest, and Pacific Southwest. Southern British Columbia will have near-normal temperatures, while the rest of Canada will be warmer than normal. Expect near- or below-normal precipitation in most areas of the United States and Canada, although southeastern Ontario will have a rainy month. —*Michael Steinberg, Old Farmer’s Almanac meteorologist*

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HUMOR ME

GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC



BENCHED

An old gentleman, clad in a somewhat youthful suit of light gray flannel, sat on a bench in the park, enjoying the spring day.

“What’s the matter, sonny?” he asked a small boy who lay on

the grass and stared at him intently. “Why don’t you go and play?”

“Don’t want to,” the boy replied.

“But it’s not natural for a boy to be so quiet,” continued the old man. “Why don’t you want to?”

“Oh, I’m just waitin’—,” the little fellow answered, “—waitin’ till you get up, ’cuz a man painted that bench about 15 minutes ago.”

MACHINE LEARNING

A Rhode Island boy was asked by his mother to accompany her to the country, but he refused to go, despite her considerable coaxing and pleading.

When the father was told this after coming home, he asked his wife if she had asked their son why he refused to go.

It turned out that she hadn’t, so he approached their son and asked, “Johnny, why don’t you want to



go to the country?”

“Well,” answered the boy, “they have thrashing machines out there, and it’s bad enough right here when you do it by hand.”

PORPOISEFUL QUESTION

The teacher was describing the dolphin and its habits.

“And, children,” she said impressively, “a single dolphin can have a hundred offspring.”

“Goodness!” gasped a little girl in the back row. “And how about married ones?!”

ROLLING

In a large Cincinnati department store, an obliging salesman had taken nearly every roll of cloth but one from the shelves to show to a

persistent woman. The last roll was on the top shelf.

“You needn’t bother anymore,” she remarked to the weary clerk, who was about to reach for the remaining roll. “I was simply waiting for a friend.”

“Madame,” said the clerk, “if you think that she’s in the last roll, I’ll gladly get it down for you.”

SUPER SLEUTHING

A man wanted by the police in a New Hampshire city had previously been photographed in six different positions, so the photos were duly circulated among the state’s constabulary. A few days after the set of portraits had been issued, the chief of police in a country town wrote to the city

department as follows:

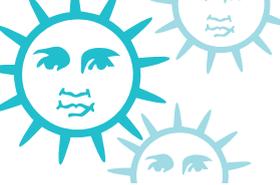
“I duly received the pictures of the six miscreants whose capture is desired. I have arrested five of them. The sixth is under observation and will be secured shortly.”

INSPECTION TIME

Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was listening with an inscrutable smile to the praises of a financial magnate that were being sung by a senator at a dinner.

“He’s the architect of his own fortune, too,” said the senator, “—entirely the architect of his own fortune.”

“If that’s the case,” said Secretary Bryan, “it’s a lucky thing for him that the building inspector didn’t come ’round while the operation was going on.”



WHAT'S NEXT



GARDENING
Pantry Potions for
Plant Pests



CALENDAR
Moon phases; May
name origins, holidays,
and full Moon names;
poem of the month



**LIVING
NATURALLY**
Remembering
the Departed



ROMANCE
How to Stay
Married for 50 Years



FOOD
Mother's Day
Recipes



ASTRONOMY
Explore with
our Sky Map

Plus: Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts •
Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Best Days to Do Things •
• Humor • and much more in the May *EXTRA!*

CELEBRATING THE ALMANAC'S 230TH YEAR!