

# Anzac Day - 1

## What is Anzac Day?

Anzac Day is held on 25 April each year. It is a day to remember the people who served Australia in a war or who serve in the defence forces today. Anzac Day is also a time to think about peaceful ways to solve conflicts rather than by war.

## What is the history of Anzac Day?

The letters in 'Anzac' stand for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. Soldiers from these two countries played a very important part during World War I which was from 1914 to 1918. These soldiers became known as the Anzacs. On 25 April 1915, the Anzacs landed at Gallipoli on the coast of Turkey. Their job was to fight the Turkish army to gain control over an area called the Dardanelles. The Dardanelles is a narrow passage of water (a strait). Then allied (friendly) ships could travel up the strait with much needed food, supplies and equipment for troops further north-east of the strait.



Unfortunately, the Anzacs were landed at the wrong place. The area had a narrow beach and steep cliffs on which the Turks could easily see them. The Anzacs had to dig trenches in the hard ground to hide and live in. They had little food and water and the weather was extremely hot. Flies and rats were everywhere. In spite of all this hardship, the Anzacs 'stuck together', helped each other out and courageously continued to fight. Many thousands of Anzacs were killed and wounded. Eventually, the troops that were left were evacuated by ships. This 'spirit of the Anzac' is still recognised and remembered today.

## How is Anzac Day commemorated in Australia?



Anzac Day is a public holiday in Australia. Cities and towns all over the country hold dawn services. These include events like a soldier playing special tunes on a bugle, a short prayer, a hymn, an address by an important speaker, a silence of one minute, a special poem called 'The ode', singing of the national anthem and the laying of floral wreaths. In the larger cities, there is a march-past. Here you will find men and women who served in a war or are in the services today. Often, you will see young people marching for their relatives who are no longer able to march. Many schools also hold Anzac Day services on a school day close to Anzac Day.