

Should We Get Rid of Daylight Saving Time?

Daylight saving time brings us more sunshine and playtime. But is it worth the exhaustion, crankiness, and worse?

By Mackenzie Carro
2020

In this text, Mackenzie Carro shares how people feel about daylight savings time.

As you read, take notes on the evidence used to support the ideas in the text.

- [1] You can barely lift your head off the pillow. Your body feels weak. All you want to do is crawl under the covers and sleep for 50 years.

Do you have a cold? The flu?

Nope. It's just the first day of daylight saving time (DST), and you've lost an hour of sleep.

DST is observed in 70 countries, including most of the U.S. It begins on the second Sunday in March, when we move our clocks forward one hour. It ends on the first Sunday of November, when we change our clocks back.

- [5] Moving the clocks ahead gives us less sunlight in the morning and more in the evening. In other words, it stays light later.



"Child in Beige Hoodie Leaning Forward On Table Feeling Tired" by Karolina Grabowska is licensed under CC0.

That might sound like a bright idea. But many people aren't so sure. A recent¹ poll² found that 40 percent of Americans would rather not set their clocks ahead each spring.

So should we get rid of daylight saving time?

1. Recent (adjective) : happening in the very near past
2. Poll (noun) : the collection and counting of votes

So Sleepy

DST got its start in the U.S. as a way to save energy³ during World War I (1914-1918). With an extra hour of sunlight each evening, the government believed, Americans wouldn't use as much electricity to light their homes. In 1966, DST became permanent.⁴

But today, it's unclear whether DST saves energy. Some studies show that energy use actually increases during DST, because people blast air conditioning and drive more on sunny evenings.

- [10] And when we move our clocks forward in the spring, we lose an hour of precious sleep. This can be an especially big problem for kids, who need more snooze time than adults. More than 50 percent of kids already aren't getting enough sleep, according to a 2019 study. That can lead to health problems — and just plain crankiness.

The tiredness doesn't just affect kids either. During the first few days after the time switch, more adults suffer heart attacks and injuries⁵ at work. The number of traffic accidents jumps too, because there are more tired drivers on the road.

More Sunshine

But fans of DST say it's better for our health and safety in the long run. Some research⁶ shows that although car accidents increase right after the time change, they drop overall during DST. One reason is that people aren't driving in the dark as much at the end of the day. There's also less crime, because our streets stay lighter later.

And with longer days, we get more time outside — which lowers stress,⁷ improves memory, and gives us energy. Sunshine provides vitamin⁸ D, which boosts our mood and supports healthy bones. Plus, kids get more exercise, because they can play outside for longer after school.

So should we keep changing our clocks, or is it time to leave time alone?

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3. Energy (noun) : the amount of power needed to do something
 4. Permanent (adjective) : something that lasts forever
 5. Injury (noun) : harm to the body caused by damage, such as a cut, a broken bone, or a burn
 6. Research (noun) : careful study of something to find out information about it
 7. a state of worry caused by a difficult situation
 8. Vitamin (noun) : one of a number of materials needed for the health and normal working of the body

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences. Write it as a Restate-Answer.

1. Which of the following best describes the central idea of the text?
 - A. If all countries had daylight savings time, the world would be a safer place.
 - B. Daylight savings time plays an important part in keeping the planet healthy.
 - C. Daylight savings time was disliked when it first started, but now it is more popular.
 - D. Many people dislike daylight savings time even though it does have some benefits.

2. How does the author introduce the text in paragraphs 1-3?
 - A. by giving the reader examples of other places that have daylight saving time
 - B. by telling a story about their own experience with daylight saving time
 - C. by sharing facts about how daylight saving time is observed
 - D. by explaining how daylight saving time can affect people

3. Which detail best highlights the main goal of daylight savings time?
 - A. "Nope. It's just the first day of daylight saving time (DST), and you've lost an hour of sleep." (Paragraph 3)
 - B. "With an extra hour of sunlight each evening, the government believed, Americans wouldn't use as much electricity to light their homes." (Paragraph 8)
 - C. "More than 50 percent of kids already aren't getting enough sleep, according to a 2019 study. That can lead to health problems — and just plain crankiness." (Paragraph 10)
 - D. "One reason is that people aren't driving in the dark as much at the end of the day. There's also less crime, because our streets stay lighter later." (Paragraph 12)

4. What does the term "boost" most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 13?
 - A. helps out
 - B. speeds up
 - C. slows down
 - D. makes worse

5. How does the author support the idea that the U.S. should get rid of daylight savings time?
