

EARTH DAY

Earth Day is a name used by two different observances held annually in the (northern) spring, both intended to inspire awareness of and appreciation for the [Earth's](#) environment.



The Equinoctial Earth Day

The equinoctial Earth Day is celebrated on the [vernal equinox](#) to mark the precise moment that spring begins in the [Northern Hemisphere](#) and autumn in the [Southern Hemisphere](#). On equinox, night and day are in equal length anywhere on Earth. Therefore, a perfectly vertical pole standing on the equator at noon during equinox will not cast a shadow. At the [South Pole](#), the sun sets and ends a six-month-long day while at the [North Pole](#), the sun rises and hence ends six months of continuous darkness.

The [United Nations](#) marks *Earth Day* each year on the [vernal equinox](#) (around March 21). On [February 26, 1971](#), UN Secretary-General [U Thant](#) signed a proclamation to that effect. At the moment of the equinox, it is traditional to observe the day by ringing the [Japanese Peace Bell](#), a bell donated by Japan to the United Nations.^[2] The United Nations also works with organizers of the April 22nd global event.

[John McConnell](#) first introduced the idea of a global holiday called *Earth Day* at a UNESCO Conference on the Environment in [1969](#), the same year that he designed the [Earth flag](#). The first *Earth Day* proclamation was issued by [San Francisco](#) Mayor [Joseph Alioto](#) on [March 21, 1970](#). U Thant supported John McConnell's global initiative to celebrate this annual spring equinox event. Secretary General [Waldheim](#) observed *Earth Day* with similar ceremonies in 1972. The United Nations *Earth Day* ceremony continued each year on the day of the March equinox (20th or 21st), with the ringing of the U.N. Peace Bell at the very moment of the equinox.

The April 22 Earth Day

Responding to wide spread environmental degradation, United States Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin called for an Environmental [Teach-in](#) or Earth Day to be held on [April 22, 1970](#). Over 20 million people participated and it is now observed each year by more than 500 million people and national government in 175 countries.

From: Wikipedia.com

**DON'T FORGET:
TAX FILING DEADLINE IS APRIL 17!**

Want information about tax benefits, services, and credits for which you may be eligible?
Need forms? Have questions about filing requirements and procedures?

Visit www.irs.gov for a number of excellent resources!

AMERICAN

Accent

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. CONSULATE
MUMBAI

AMERICAN CITIZEN
SERVICES UNIT

AMERICAN CONSULATE
GENERAL MUMBAI
78, BHULABHAI DESAI RD.
MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA
400 026

PHONE:

(91-22) 2363-3611,
EXTENSIONS
4306/4134/4237

FAX:

(91-22) 2367-7026 OR
(91-22) 2363-0350

EMAIL:
MUMBAIACS@STATE.GOV

PLEASE REGISTER WITH US
AT:

[HTTPS://
TRAVELREGISTRATION
STATE.GOV/IBRS](https://travelregistration.state.gov/IBRS)



NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS – APPLYING TO VISIT THE U.S.

We often receive inquiries from American Citizens whose friends and relatives would like to visit the United States. If applying in Mumbai, applicants must follow the procedures regarding the submission of documents in advance of their scheduled interviews. All applicants must make their appointments via our off-site appointment provider, VFS. More information on how to apply can be found on the VFS website at <http://www.vfs-usa.co.in>

Remember – Apply Early

According to U.S. visa laws and regulations, [all nonimmigrant visa applicants must be interviewed](#). As a result, the amount of time it can take to obtain a visa has increased. We suggest you to apply early for your visa. Please visit the [VFS website](#) to seek an appointment. Note that a family can schedule appointments for all family members together in the same slot.

To view the current wait times for nonimmigrant visas, [click here](#).

The Mumbai Consular District

Applicants should apply at the consular office responsible for the consular district in which they live. The Mumbai Consular District includes the states of Maharashtra, Chhatisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra, and Nagar Haveli.

Applying for a visa and don't speak or understand English? That's not a problem.

Many persons apply in English, which is the language spoken by all Consular officers. However, we have interpreters on staff who speak Hindi, Gujarati, and Marathi. Do not let a language limitation become an obstacle in your interview.

Application by Interview

All nonimmigrant visa applicants must come to the Consulate for an interview. Please visit the [VFS website](#) for information on how to schedule an interview appointment. If you are unable to schedule your appointment online through VFS, you must fill out Application Forms DS-156 and DS-157 and submit them to a VFS office. And, depending on your type of visa, you may need to fill out additional forms. Please see our list of [required documents and fees](#) for further details.

At the time of the interview, you must bring an individual **passport** that is valid for travel for at least six months after the date of entry in to the U.S. All nonimmigrant visa applicants, including children, must have a valid passport.

Due to security concerns and space limitations, the Consulate does not permit interested parties such as friends, relatives or business contacts to intervene on behalf of a non-immigrant visa applicant during an interview. If any such party wishes to present facts to the Consulate concerning a particular visa case, they are encouraged to supply this information directly to the applicant. Letters, faxes, or emails sent to the consular section in anticipation of applications are seldom available to the interviewing officer at the time the applicant appears for an interview.

AMERICAN

Accent

DEPARTMENT OF
STATE

U.S. CONSULATE
MUMBAI

AMERICAN CITIZEN
SERVICES UNIT

AMERICAN CONSULATE
GENERAL MUMBAI
78, BHULABHAI DESAI RD.
MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA
400 026

PHONE:

(91-22) 2363-3611,
EXTENSIONS
4306/4134/4237

FAX:

(91-22) 2367-7026 OR
(91-22) 2363-0350

EMAIL:

MUMBAIACS@STATE.GOV

PLEASE REGISTER WITH US
AT:

[HTTPS://
TRAVELREGISTRATION
STATE.GOV/IBRS](https://travelregistration.state.gov/IBRS)



NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS – APPLYING TO VISIT THE U.S. (CONTINUED)

Important things to remember when filling out application forms:

Submit only valid documents. Fraud or misrepresentation can result in permanent ineligibility for a nonimmigrant visa.

- Respond to all the questions. If you have no response for a question, put "none" or "nil" - do not draw a line or write "NA" or "not applicable"
- You must provide specific contact and address information both in India and the United States. Applications with responses such as "any hotel" as the address in the U.S. will be rejected for additional information.
- You must sign your application, even if someone else fills it out.
- All applicants are personally responsible and accountable for the answers on their application forms, regardless of who fills out the forms.

When planning to apply for a business/tourist visa to the U.S., ask yourself these questions:

- What is the purpose of my trip?
- What evidence can I show to demonstrate that I will return to India?
- What do I need to show that I can afford this trip?
- You should also bring along any documents you think will be helpful to establish your financial ability to travel, your business connections either in India or the US, and other social or economic ties which will serve to compel your return to India after a limited visit.
- If you are going to the U.S. for short-term business or tourism and do not hold a valid U.S. visa, you will need to apply for a **B1** or **B2** visa. In order to apply for a visa, you will need to arrange an interview appointment at the Consulate. Please visit the [VFS website](#) for complete information on this process.

Please refer to specific documentary requirements for students, exchange visitors, temporary workers and other specific types of visas.

For additional inquiries, call 2363-7407, fax 2363-0350 or email mumbainiv@state.gov.

WE'RE TAKING CHARGE!

Good News! Effective Monday, April 2, we will be accepting credit card payment for American Citizen Service fees! We will accept cards with Visa, Master Card, American Express, Diners Club, or Discover logos. We will continue to accept cash and demand drafts as well.

AMERICAN

Accent

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. CONSULATE
MUMBAI

AMERICAN CITIZEN
SERVICES UNIT

AMERICAN CONSULATE
GENERAL MUMBAI
78, BHULABHAI DESAI RD.
MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA
400 026

PHONE:

(91-22) 2363-3611,
EXTENSIONS
4306/4134/4237

FAX:

(91-22) 2367-7026 OR
(91-22) 2363-0350

EMAIL:
MUMBAIACS@STATE.GOV

PLEASE REGISTER WITH US
AT:

[HTTPS://
TRAVELREGISTRATION
STATE.GOV/IBRS](https://travelregistration.state.gov/IBRS)



SPOTLIGHT ON: THE AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB OF BOMBAY

For foreigners living in India, it is often of immense help to get to know other people from the international community and share experiences and advice. With this in mind, the American Women's Club of Bombay (AWC) aims to enrich members' stay in India by providing an opportunity for people from the international community to get to know each other.

This network of friendship and support has been active for over 50 years, and remains strong today, with a diverse membership spanning different countries, backgrounds and ages. Many of our members are based in Mumbai on postings for a specific period, whilst others plan to stay long-term or have lived in the city for many years. You don't have to be an American citizen to join, and however long you are planning to stay, you are sure to meet like-minded people through the AWC and forge lasting friendships through the incredible shared experience of living in India.

Our members receive a monthly newsletter and are invited to regular coffee mornings. In addition, there are many opportunities to participate in voluntary or charitable work, as well as annual social activities such as Thanksgiving and Christmas events.

If you are considering or planning a move to Mumbai, or if you are interested in joining the AWC, please feel free to contact us by emailing admin@awcbombay.com

YOU TELL US: ABSENTEE VOTER SURVEY

Dear Voter:

We are conducting a survey of overseas and military absentee voters and are inviting you to tell us about your experience with voting or trying to vote in the November 2006 election. Please take 8-10 minutes to fill out this survey. Your responses are confidential and will be used to improve overseas voting programs.

This survey is sponsored by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and being conducted by the Overseas Vote Foundation and our project partner, Q2 Data & Research, LLC. Your feedback will help to influence developments which will make it easier for us to participate!

Please help by sharing your experiences and opinions with us. Only with your feedback can we make good recommendations. Thank you in advance for your time.

From your friends at Overseas Vote Foundation.

Please use this internet address to begin the survey:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB2267HAA8QWY>

HELPFUL HINT

Always make a copy of your passport, visa, and credit cards (front and back). This will help you quickly report a loss or theft and facilitate the replacement of these items. Carry a copy with you (separate from the originals) and leave a copy with family or friends or scan and email yourself a copy.

AMERICAN

Accent

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. CONSULATE
MUMBAI

AMERICAN CITIZEN
SERVICES UNIT

AMERICAN CONSULATE
GENERAL MUMBAI
78, BHULABHAI DESAI RD.
MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA
400 026

PHONE:

(91-22) 2363-3611,
EXTENSIONS
4306/4134/4237

FAX:

(91-22) 2367-7026 OR
(91-22) 2363-0350

EMAIL:

MUMBAIACS@STATE.GOV

PLEASE REGISTER WITH US
AT:

[HTTPS://
TRAVELREGISTRATION
STATE.GOV/IBRS](https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: When Should I Renew My Expiring Passport?

A: It is up to you. You may renew it at any time, including after it has already expired. However, please be aware that some countries will only permit entry if you have at least six months validity left on your current passport. It takes 5-7 working days to get your passport renewed, so plan accordingly!

AMERICAN Accent IS SEEKING READER INPUT

We hope that through this newsletter, Americans can stay in better contact with the U.S. Consulate and the rest of the American community throughout India. In our effort to improve this newsletter and make it more useful to our American community in India, the **AMERICAN Accent** staff is seeking your submissions of:

Letters to the Editor: In order to more adequately address the concerns that members of the American community have, we would like to start a “Letters to the Editor” section of the newsletter. All Americans who have questions or concerns that they think could also benefit the American community as a whole are encouraged to submit letters. The **AMERICAN Accent** staff will try to print and respond to those letters that deal with issues affecting the entire American community.

Organizational Profiles: We would like to make it a normal practice of highlighting charity and non-profit organizations through which Americans are working to assist India. We welcome organizations to submit a short (150-300 word) description of their group to the newsletter. If and when possible, in each future edition, we will highlight a different group.

Other Articles: If you have another topic that you believe would be of interest to the American community, feel free to submit your ideas to the **AMERICAN Accent** staff. Articles should be between 150 to 300 words in length.

ACS OFFICE HOURS

Our office is open to American citizens for routine services from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on all weekdays except for official holidays. (The next official American and Indian holidays are April 6 for Good Friday and May 1 for Maharashtra Day) Please see our website for a complete list of official holidays.

If visiting during office hours, you do not require an appointment unless you are applying for a Consular Report of Birth or to formally renounce U.S. citizenship. Please remember that the Consulate’s number one priority is to provide service to American citizens. If you need emergency assistance outside of regular business hours, please see the left panel of the newsletter for contact information.

If you believe you have missed a recent “warden message” sent to American citizens in India, please visit http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/warden_information.html to see all recent warden messages issued by the U.S. Consulate in Mumbai.

KIDS CORNER: SPRINGTIME COLORING PAGE

