

## LET'S TALK ABOUT JANUARY 26

January 26 is an important date for many Australians: Non-Indigenous people, migrant communities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is important to understand the significance of this day for First Nations, to practise cultural sensitivity, and to know what you can do to support First Nations on this day.

Although the actual date is contested, January 26 represents the landing of Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet on the shores of the lands now referred to as Australia. It also represents the false proclamation of British sovereignty on Aboriginal lands. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people this day represents the invasion of country and survival of culture – signifying the histories of atrocities, dispossession from land, removal from family, massacres, and attempted genocide against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For these reasons you may hear January 26 referred to as Invasion Day, Survival Day, or Day of Mourning.

As this day approaches, it is important to reflect on historical atrocities and their continuing impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. The celebration of January 26 can evoke strong responses and emotions, making it a critical time to demonstrate allyship by promoting truth-telling, understanding, respect, healing, and reconciliation.



### Did you know?

- Australia did not become a nation until 1901, and 'Australia Day' officially became a national public holiday in 1994.
- Aboriginal leaders have been boycotting celebrations of this nature since the 1800s.
- What is now 'Australia Day' was declared the Day of Mourning by Aboriginal peoples on the 26 of January 1938.

### Approaching January 26 respectfully.

Reconciliation NSW encourages local government, organisations, community groups and individuals to consider the legacy of trauma that colonisation has imprinted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to engage in conversations around changing the date.

Reconciliation cannot progress while we continue to celebrate Australia as a nation on a day that signifies the trauma, dispossession, and oppression of First Nations People.

- The Australia Reconciliation Barometer measures the progress of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians. [Read the 2022 main findings and report here.](#)
- [Read our letter of Support for Changing the Date of Australia Day Celebrations](#) in the Inner West Council area.

**Here are some simple ways to mark January 26 respectfully and acknowledge local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities!**

## LEARN

**Be curious and educate yourself** – learning more about the true history of this continent and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples will enhance understanding of the significance of January 26.

- [Ally reading list](#)
- [Ally viewing list](#)
- [Resources and activities for teaching Indigenous knowledge](#)
- Read the Women's Agenda Article [If Australians are "all in this together", changing the date of our national day should be a no-brainer](#)

**Consult with local Lands Councils, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members** and inform yourself of their views on the date to help you develop a respectful and informed approach.

## ACT

**Attend one of the 'Survival Day' or 'Invasion Day' events**

- The '[Yabun](#)' Festival
- [The Vigil at Barangaroo](#), Sydney
- [Wugulora Morning Ceremony](#) – Barangaroo, Sydney
- [Invasion Day Rally](#), Belmore Park Sydney CBD (find your local rally on Google)
- Regularly view our [Events Calendar](#)

**Hold celebratory events on an alternative date(s)**

**Follow us on social media** ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Linkedin](#)) or [sign up as a member](#) for resources and information about NSW reconciliation efforts.

## SHARE

**Share your new knowledge** and have a respectful conversation with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours about what you've learned and the different perspectives.