

## Associations<sup>[edit]</sup>

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### Harvest<sup>[edit]</sup>

Association with the transition from warm to cold weather, and its related status as the season of the primary [harvest](#), has dominated its themes and popular images. In Western cultures, personifications of autumn are usually pretty, well-fed females adorned with fruits, vegetables and grains that ripen at this time. Many cultures feature autumnal [harvest festivals](#), often the most important on their calendars.

Still-extant echoes of these celebrations are found in the autumn [Thanksgiving](#) holiday of the United States and Canada, and the Jewish [Sukkot](#) holiday with its roots as a full-moon harvest festival of "tabernacles" (living in outdoor huts around the time of harvest). There are also the many festivals celebrated by [indigenous peoples of the Americas](#) tied to the harvest of ripe foods gathered in the wild, the Chinese Mid-Autumn or [Moon festival](#), and many others. The predominant mood of these autumnal celebrations is a gladness for the fruits of the earth mixed with a certain melancholy linked to the imminent arrival of harsh weather.

This view is presented in English poet [John Keats](#)' poem [To Autumn](#), where he describes the season as a time of bounteous fecundity, a time of 'mellow fruitfulness'.

In North America, while most foods are harvested during the autumn, foods usually associated with the season include [pumpkins](#) (which are integral parts of both Thanksgiving and [Halloween](#)) and [apples](#), which are used to make the seasonal beverage [apple cider](#).

### Melancholia<sup>[edit]</sup>



"Jesień" (Autumn) [Józef Chełmoński picture of 1875](#) presenting a typical view of autumn in [Polish 19th century countryside](#)

Autumn, especially in poetry, has often been associated with [melancholia](#). The possibilities and opportunities of summer are gone, and the chill of winter is on the horizon. Skies turn grey, the amount of usable daylight drops rapidly, and many people turn inward, both physically and mentally.<sup>[23]</sup> It has been referred to as an unhealthy season.<sup>[24]</sup>

Similar examples may be found in Irish poet [W.B. Yeats](#)' poem *The Wild Swans at Coole* where the maturing season that the poet observes symbolically represents his own ageing self. Like the natural world that he observes, he too has reached his prime and now must look forward to the inevitability of old age and death. French poet [Paul Verlaine](#)'s "*Chanson d'automne*" ("Autumn Song") is likewise characterised by strong, painful feelings of sorrow. [Keats](#)' *To Autumn*, written in September 1819, echoes this sense of melancholic reflection but also emphasises the lush abundance of the season. The song "[Autumn Leaves](#)", based on the French song "Les Feuilles mortes", uses the melancholic atmosphere of the season and the end of summer as a metaphor for the mood of being separated from a loved one.<sup>[25]</sup>

## Halloween<sup>[edit]</sup>

Autumn is associated with [Halloween](#) (influenced by [Samhain](#), a Celtic autumn festival),<sup>[26]</sup> and with it a widespread marketing campaign that promotes it. The Celtic people also used this time to celebrate the [harvest](#) with a time of feasting. At the same time though, it was a celebration of death as well. Crops were harvested, livestock were butchered, and Winter was coming.<sup>[27]</sup>

Halloween, 31 October, is in autumn in the northern hemisphere. Television, film, book, costume, home decoration, and confectionery businesses use this time of year to promote products closely associated with such a holiday, with promotions going from late August or early September to 31 October, since their themes rapidly lose strength once the holiday ends, and advertising starts concentrating on Christmas.

## Other associations<sup>[edit]</sup>

In some parts of the northern hemisphere, autumn has a strong association with the end of [summer holiday](#) and the [start of a new school year](#), particularly for children in primary and secondary education. "[Back to School](#)" advertising and preparations usually occurs in the weeks leading to the beginning of autumn.

[Thanksgiving Day](#) is a national holiday celebrated in Canada, in the United States, in some of the [Caribbean islands](#) and in [Liberia](#). Thanksgiving is celebrated on the [second Monday of October](#) in Canada and on the [fourth Thursday of November](#) in the United States, and around the same part of the year in other places. Similarly named festival holidays occur in [Germany](#) and [Japan](#).

Television stations and networks, particularly in North America, traditionally begin their regular seasons in their autumn, with new series and new episodes of existing series debuting mostly during late September or early October (series that debut outside the autumn season are usually known as [mid-season replacements](#)). A sweeps period takes place in November to measure [Nielsen Ratings](#).

[American football](#) is played almost exclusively in the autumn months; at the [high school level](#), seasons run from late August through early November, with some playoff games and [holiday rivalry contests](#) being played as late as Thanksgiving. In many American states, the championship games take place in early December. [College football](#)'s regular season runs from September through November, while the main [professional](#) circuit, the [National Football League](#), plays from September through to early January.

Summer sports, such as [association football](#) (in [Northern America](#), [East Asia](#), [Argentina](#) and [South Africa](#)), [Canadian football](#), [stock car racing](#), [tennis](#), [golf](#), [cricket](#), and professional [baseball](#), wrap up their seasons in early to late autumn; [Major League Baseball](#)'s championship [World Series](#) is known popularly as the "Fall Classic".<sup>[28]</sup> (Amateur baseball is usually finished by August.) Likewise, professional winter sports, such as [ice hockey](#) and [basketball](#), and most leagues of [association football](#) in [Europe](#), are in the early stages of their seasons during autumn; American [college basketball](#) and [college ice hockey](#) play teams outside their [athletic conferences](#) during the late autumn before their in-conference schedules begin in winter.

The [Christian](#) religious holidays of [All Saints' Day](#) and [All Souls' Day](#) are observed in autumn in the Northern hemisphere. [Easter](#) falls in autumn in the southern hemisphere.

The secular celebration of [International Workers' Day](#) also falls in autumn in the southern hemisphere.

Since 1997, [Autumn](#) has been one of the top 100 names for girls in the United States.<sup>[29]</sup>

In Indian mythology, autumn is considered to be the preferred season for the goddess of learning [Saraswati](#), who is also known by the name of "goddess of autumn" (Sharada).

In Asian mysticism, Autumn is associated with the [element](#) of [metal](#), and subsequently with the colour [white](#), the [White Tiger of the West](#), and death and mourning.