**Kwanzaa**

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| [Kwanza-RonKarenga.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kwanza-RonKarenga.jpg) | |
| **Observed by** | [African Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Americans) |
| **Type** | Cultural and ethnic |
| **Significance** | Celebrates African heritage, unity, and culture. |
| **Celebrations** | Unity Creativity Faith Giving gifts |
| **Date** | December 26 to January 1 |

**Kwanzaa** ([/ˈkwɑːn.zə/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA_for_English)) meaning "first fruits of the harvest”, is a week-long celebration held in the United States. The celebration honors African heritage in [African-American culture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African-American_culture), and is observed from December 26 to January 1, culminating in a feast and gift-giving. Kwanzaa has seven core principles, and it was first celebrated in 1966–67.

**Seven Principles and Symbols**

* Unity: To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
* Self-Determination: To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.
* Collective Work and Responsibility: To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems, and to solve them together.
* [Cooperative Economics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooperative_economics): To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other busin
* Purpose: To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
* Creativity: To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
* Faith: To believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Kwanzaa symbols include a decorative mat on which other symbols are placed: [corn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corn) and other crops, a candle holder with seven candles, a communal cup for pouring, gifts, a poster of the seven principles, and a black, red, and green flag. The symbols were designed to convey the seven principles.

The holiday has also spread to Canada, and is celebrated by Black Canadians in a similar fashion as in the United States