

# Winter Celebrations Excerpt



# What do you know about groundhogs?

Groundhogs are typically

- 16-26 inches (40.6 – 66 cm) long,
- weigh 4-15 pounds (1.8 – 7 kg) and
- seldom live more than six years in the wild but can live longer (and are likely to weigh more) in captivity.

Try the following trivia quiz to learn more.

## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

1. In Europe and ancient Rome, hedgehogs, not groundhogs, were used to predict the coming of spring. Groundhogs – also known as woodchucks – are used in North America because they are seen as cuter.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

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True \_\_\_ False X  
What's cuter than this?



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

2. Groundhogs are a type of rodent related to squirrels, but they whistle when they are alarmed and when they are courting other groundhogs, which is why they are sometimes also known as “whistle pigs.”

True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

2. Groundhogs are a type of rodent related to squirrels, but they whistle when they are alarmed and when they are courting other groundhogs, which is why they are sometimes also known as “whistle pigs.”

True X False    





## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

3. Groundhogs are surprisingly fast and have powerful jaws that make quick work of their common diet of insects, grubs or small animals. Watch your fingers when handling.

True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_



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True  False



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

3. Groundhogs are fast with powerful jaws, but mostly confine their chewing to wild grasses, leaves, berries, nuts, and food crops (to farmers' frustration). Only occasionally do they eat insects, grubs or small animals. And in winter they tend to be slo-o-o-o-w.






Trivia quiz:  
Groundhog Day

4. Groundhogs are true hibernators that go into a deep coma, where the body temperature drops to a few degrees above freezing, the heart barely beats, the blood scarcely flows, and breathing nearly stops. But the duration depends on the climate – longer in Ontario than Atlanta.

True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_



Trivia quiz:  
Groundhog Day

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True X False \_\_\_

## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day



5. Punxsutawney Phil, the Pennsylvania-based groundhog that gets the most publicity and even had a 1993 Hollywood movie centered on his predictions, is able to be awakened because he spends his time in a special enclosure at a local library.

True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_

## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day



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True X False

# Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

5. For most of the year, Phil lives in a climate-controlled home at the Punxsutawney Library. He is taken to Gobbler's Knob and placed in a heated burrow underneath a simulated tree stump on stage before being pulled out at 7:25 am on Groundhog Day, February 2, to make his prediction.

## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

6. If you want a short winter, you must hope that the day is cloudy, because if the animal sees its shadow, it will run back into its burrow to hibernate for another six weeks of cold weather.

True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

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True X False    





## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

7. February 2 is also Candlemas – literally a blessing of candles – 40 days after the celebration of Christmas on the Christian calendar. Depending on whether the day was sunny or overcast, Candlemas was also considered a predictor of spring beginning hundreds of years ago, but with the opposite effect of Groundhog Day – a sunny day meant winter would soon be over.

True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_

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True  False

## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

7. Candlemas predicts a short winter only if it's a cloudy day. One common rhyme related to it goes like this:

*If Candlemas be fair and bright,  
Winter has another flight.  
If Candlemas brings clouds and rain,  
Winter will not come again.*

## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

8. Punxsutawney Phil gets the most publicity, but groundhogs named Chuck, Bob, Gary, Jimmy, Spanish Joe, and Pardon Me Pete, to name just a few, are also celebrated yearly from Manitoba, Canada to Tampa, FL on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

True \_\_\_\_      False \_\_\_\_



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True  X       False    



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

9. The area of Punxsutawney was first settled by the Delaware Indians who appropriately named it "ponksad-uteney" which means "area of small rodents."  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_  
(We're showing another hedgehog cuz' it's cuter.)



# Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

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True \_\_\_\_\_ False X

It means "town of the sandflies." Why did anyone stay?



## Trivia quiz: Groundhog Day

10. Woodchucks (aka groundhogs) are not adept at chomping timber like beavers, although some are gnawers. If, however, a woodchuck could chuck wood, how much wood would that woodchuck chuck?

- a. 350 pounds (159 kg)
- b. 700 pounds (317 kg)





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Learn more at

<http://www.news.cornell.edu/chronicle/96/2.1.96/facts.html>



I hope you've enjoyed  
learning about  
Groundhog Day.



For more information or more slide shows,  
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and please review [www.WiserNow.com](http://www.WiserNow.com) and  
[www.CreatingDelight.com](http://www.CreatingDelight.com)