

“It takes a special kind of person to heed the call of service, to stand your ground when others seek shelter, to face unmentionable danger so others can stay safe ...”

Jean Manes, former U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, Veterans Day 2018



A joint service honor guard presents the colors and the nation's military service flags during a Veterans Day ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 11, 2018. Photo by Alex Wroblewski

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

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The following excerpts are from Katie Lange's article "5 Facts to Know About Veterans Day," posted at [defense.gov](https://www.defense.gov).

VETERANS DAY DOES NOT HAVE AN APOSTROPHE. A lot of people think it's "Veteran's Day" or "Veterans' Day," but they are incorrect. The holiday is not a day that "belongs" to one veteran or multiple veterans, which is what an apostrophe implies. It's a day for honoring all veterans, so no apostrophe is needed.

VETERANS DAY IS NOT THE SAME AS MEMORIAL DAY.

Memorial Day is a time to remember those who gave their lives for our country, particularly in battle or from wounds they suffered in battle. Veterans Day honors all of those who have served the country in war or peace – dead or alive – although it's largely intended to thank living veterans for their sacrifices.

THE DAY WAS ORIGINALLY CALLED ARMISTICE DAY, COMMEMORATING THE END OF THE GREAT WAR. World War I officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed June 28, 1919. However, the fighting ended about seven months before that, when the Allies and Germany put into effect an armistice on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

For that reason, Nov. 11, 1918, was largely considered the end of "the war to end all wars" and dubbed Armistice Day. In 1926, Congress officially recognized it as the end of the war, and in 1938, it became an official holiday, primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I.

Then World War II and the Korean War happened. On June 1, 1954, at the urging of veterans service organizations, Congress amended the commemoration again by changing "armistice" to "veterans" so the day would honor U.S. veterans of all wars.

For a while, the date was changed, too, causing confusion.

Congress signed the Uniform Holiday Bill in 1968 to ensure that a few federal holidays – Veterans Day included – would be celebrated on a Monday. Officials hoped it would spur travel over a long weekend, which would stimulate the economy.

FOR A BRIEF TIME, VETERANS DAY WAS THE FOURTH MONDAY IN OCTOBER.

On Oct. 25, 1971, the first Veterans Day under the new bill was observed, though many states chose to continue to recognize the day in November. Within a few years, it became apparent that most Americans wanted to observe Veterans Day on Nov. 11, a day of historic significance. So on Sept. 20, 1975, President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 94-97, which returned Veterans Day to its original date starting in 1978.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Canada and Australia call Nov. 11 "Remembrance Day." Canada's observance is similar to our own, except many citizens wear red poppy flowers to honor their war dead. In Australia, the day is more akin to our Memorial Day.

Great Britain calls it "Remembrance Day," too, but observes it on the Sunday closest to Nov. 11 with parades, services and two minutes of silence in London to honor those who lost their lives in war.