

Bumps in the Night!!!!

Paranormal "U"

Friday the 13th

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Friday the 13th will occur this month and is said to be the most unlucky day of the year. It can occur anywhere from one to three times a year and on average happens once every 212 days. But do you know why this day is so unlucky and is there any truth to it? What do you do on Friday the 13th? Treat it like any other day or stay home and lock your doors? Frankly, I don't think I ever seriously contemplated how Friday the 13th came to be.

A little bit of research uncovered that there is not much substance to Friday the 13th. No one really knows the origin but it's thought it has to do with the combination of 2 superstitions, that Friday is an unlucky day and 13 is an unlucky number.

Friday:

- According to Catholic tradition this is the day when Eve tempted Adam with the forbidden fruit, Abel was killed by Cain and Jesus Christ was crucified
- In maritime history the most popular sailing superstition is that it's unlucky to begin a voyage on a Friday
- Black Friday refers to any one of several historical disasters that happened on Fridays
- In England it is said that a Friday moon brings foul weather

The Number 13:

- 13 is said to be unlucky because it follows the number 12, which is considered a complete number (e.g. 12 months in a year, 12 signs of the zodiac, 12 gods of Olympus, 12 apostles of Jesus, 12 tribes of Israel, 12 labors of Hercules, and 12 days of Christmas)
- There are no cars with the number 13 in Formula 1 racing
- In Paris, superstitious diners can hire a quatorzieme which is a professional 14th guest.
- In Italy, houses between numbers 12 and 14 are addressed as 12.5
- The 13th Tarot Card is the Death Card and depicts the Grim Reaper
- There are 13 steps leading to the gallows, 13 knots in a hangman's noose, and 13 feet which the guillotine blade falls.
- Infamous murderers Charles Manson, Harold Shipman, Frederick West, Saddam Hussein, Jeffrey Dahmer, John Wayne Gacy, Theodore Bundy, and Jack the Ripper each have 13 letters in their names.
- Many buildings do not have a 13th floor, many hospitals do not have rooms with the number 13, and many airports do not have a 13th terminal.

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These above two superstitions go as far back as biblical times but there has been no direct link between the two prior to the 19th century. The earliest evidence connecting Friday and the number 13 is from the biography of Italian composer Gioachino Rossini. In the book, *The Life of Rossini*, it says: "[Rossini] was surrounded to the last by admiring and affectionate friends; and if it be true that, like so many other Italians, he regarded Friday as an unlucky day, and thirteen as an unlucky number, it is remarkable that on Friday, the 13th of November, he died."

I believe that pop culture has popularized Friday the 13th. Some contributing factors include the "Friday the 13th" movie series that was first

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released in 1980 and grossed nearly 40 million dollars. Also, it turns out the connection between the Knights Templar and Friday the 13th was actually popularized by the 2003 novel, the Da Vinci Code. On Oct. 13, 1307, King Philip IV of France raided the homes of the Knights Templar, imprisoned them on charges of illegal activities. None of the charges were proven, but hundreds were tortured in order to force confessions, and more than a hundred died. Jacques de Molay, the last known Grand Master of the Knights Templar was burned at the stake on Friday, March 13, 1314.

Fear of Friday the 13th is called *friggatriskaidekaphobia* and is the most popular superstition in the US. It is speculated that 17-21 million Americans suffer from this fear and it costs the country a billion dollars a year in absenteeism and reduced commerce. There is no solid evidence that more tragedies or accidents occur more on Friday the 13th than any other Friday. Understandably, it is said that accidents are more common on Fridays because Friday is typically the end of the work week and people are hurrying to get home from work or out celebrating. There are numerous events tied to Friday the 13th but any person would be able to list equally as tragic events that occurred on any other day.

Some popular events that are tied to Friday the 13th include the following:

- On Friday, April 13th, 2029, a near-Earth asteroid - 99943 Apophis - will swing past the Earth
- Tupac Shakur was shot and killed in Las Vegas on Friday, Sept. 13, 1996
- On 13 October, 1989, the Dow Jones experienced the second largest drop in history. This event was later nicknamed the 'Friday the 13th mini crash'.
- A plane carrying 45 rugby team members and other passengers crashed in the Andes Mountains on Friday 13 October, 1972. Sixteen of the group survived for 72 days before being discovered and resulted to acts of cannibalism in order to stay alive.
- A huge South Asian storm killed an estimated 300,000 people in Chittagong, Bangladesh, and created floods that killed as many as 1 million in the Ganges delta on Nov. 13, 1970.
- Fidel Castro, the Prime Minister then President of Cuba, was born Friday, Aug. 13, 1926.
- Al Capone was sentenced to prison on a Friday the 13th.
- Butch Cassidy, notorious American train and bank robber, was born on Friday, April 13, 1866.

I think it's safe to say that Friday the 13th is nothing more than a myth. I would suggest that you treat this Friday the 13th like any other normal day.

