

## Happy Valentine's Day

Valentine has come around again, ready to shower us with flowers, heart shaped sweets, chocolates, cards and other presents from a secret admirer, a boyfriend or girlfriend, or simply a friend. There are always plenty of gifts to choose from.

### St. Valentine

This special day finds its origins in the third century AD. The Roman Emperor Claudius II had banned marriage since he felt that it turned men into poor soldiers. Valentine, a Christian priest in Rome, disagreed with this law, believing it important that men and women be married, instead of living in sin. He secretly and illegally wed couples so that they could live together honestly by the Church.

### Imprisoned

Unfortunately, Valentine was discovered and put into prison for breaking the law and practicing Christian beliefs. While he was in jail, he fell in love with the blind daughter of his jailer. Valentine healed her of her blindness. Before he was executed on February 14, 269 AD, he sent her a letter telling her he loved her and signed it 'Your Valentine'.

### Valentine's Day

By the 1700's in England, Valentine's Day began to resemble how we celebrate it at present. All those years ago, lovers began to express their love with gifts of flowers, sweets and cards, known as 'valentines'. In this day and age, we still celebrate the day in the same way.



### A commercial success

There are many valentines you can give to a loved one. In the 1800's, two ideas took hold and have both become huge business successes. First of all, Mrs Howland produced cards that people could buy and send to their admirer. As a result, Valentine's Day is the second most popular day of the year for sending cards, second only to Christmas. A few years later, Mr Cadbury designed the chocolate heart shaped box filled with delicious chocolates for your 'sweetheart'. Now, on Valentine's Day every year, there are at least 36 million heart shaped boxes of chocolates sold. Those were profitable ideas.

### Tips for Valentine's Day

Aside from chocolates or a card, you can choose from flowers, balloons, teddy bears, sweets, or jewellery. There are approximately 50 million red roses given on Valentine's Day around the world. However, you can also give a friend a valentine, and then a pink rose simply says 'thank you'. At school you can often order your rose and have it delivered, anonymously if needed. Of course, making your valentine a bit out of the ordinary, may be even more successful. Some tips are to bake some heart shaped cupcakes, or put together a special music playlist. You could be traditional and write a *Roses are red, violets are blue* poem.

Source: [www.abcteach.com](http://www.abcteach.com); [www.softschool.com](http://www.softschool.com)