

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

The earliest known version of the song, first appeared in a 1780 children's book called *Mirth With-Out Mischief*. Historians believe the song may be French in origin and was recited as a chant or rhyme. It was designed as a "memory and forfeits" game, in which singers tested their recall of the lyrics and had to award their opponents a "forfeit" (such as a kiss or favour of some kind), if they made a mistake.

The tune and lyrics of this now-familiar Christmas carol, dates back to the early twentieth century by English composer Frederic Austin.

Let's test your knowledge to see how well you know the 12 days of Christmas!

A _____ in a pear tree

Two _____ doves

Three French _____

_____ calling birds

Five _____ rings

_____ geese a-_____

Seven _____ a-swimming

_____ maids a-milking

Nine ladies _____

Ten lords a- _____

Eleven _____ piping

Twelve drummers _____



Did you know? The 12 days of Christmas mark the period that spans between the birth of Christ and the coming of the three wise men. It begins on December 25th and lasts until January 6th. During the Victorian era, many believed that if you ate a mince pie on each of the 12 days, that one would have 12 days of happiness.

Image Credit: *United Kingdom Postage Stamp* ca. 1977 <https://www.birdlife.org/europe-and-central-asia/news/and-partridge-pear-tree>