

# Pi ( $\pi$ ) Day

March 14, 2018

One of the oldest and the most recognizable mathematical constant in the world, pi ( $\pi$ ) is the ratio of any circle's circumference to its diameter. Its value is approximately equal to 3.14159265. It is an irrational number, which means it cannot be expressed as a ratio of whole numbers, and its decimal representation never ends or repeats.

# Facts about Pi

- Pi is the most recognized mathematical constant in the world. Scholars often consider pi the most important and intriguing number in all of mathematics
- The symbol for pi has been used regularly in its mathematical sense only for the past 250 years
- William Jones (1675-749) introduced the symbol of pi in the 1706, and it was later popularized by Leonhard Euler (1707-1783) in 1737
- In the Star Trek episode "Wolf in the Fold", Spock foils the evil computer by commanding it to "compute to last digit the value of pi."
- Scientists in Carl Sagan's novel *Contact* are able to unravel enough of pi to find hidden messages from the creators of the human race, allowing humans to access deeper levels of universal awareness
- In 1995, Hiroiyoki Gotu memorized 42,195 places of pi and is considered the current pi champion
- Darren Aronofsky's fascinating movie *Pi: Faith in Chaos* shows how the main character's attempt to find simple answers about pi (and, by extension, the universe) drives him mad
- Egyptologists and followers of mysticism have been fascinated for centuries by the fact that the Great Pyramid at Giza seems to approximate pi
- William Shanks (1812-1882) worked for years by hand to find the first 707 digits of pi. Unfortunately, he made a mistake after the 527<sup>th</sup> place and, consequently, the following digits were all wrong
- In 2002, a Japanese scientist found 124 trillion digits of pi using a powerful computer called the Hitachi SR 8000, breaking all previous records
- Pi is the secret cod in Alfred Hitchcock's *Torn Curtain* and in *The Net* starring Sandra Bullock
- Pi has been studied for almost 4,000 years. By 2000 BC, Babylonians established the constant circle ration as 3.125. the ancient Egyptians arrived at a slightly different value of 3.143
- One of the earliest known records of pi was written by an Egyptian scribe named Ahmes (c. 1650 BC) on the Rhind Papyrus. He was off by less than 1% of the modern approximation of pi (3141592)
- Albert Einstein was born on pi day (03/14/1879) in Ulm Wurttemberg, Germany
- The Bible alludes to pi in 1 Kings 7:23 where it describes the altar inside Solomon's temple: "And he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim... and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about"