

Pi (π) Day

March 14, 2018

One of the oldest and the most recognizable mathematical constant in the world, pi (π) 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 527th 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"