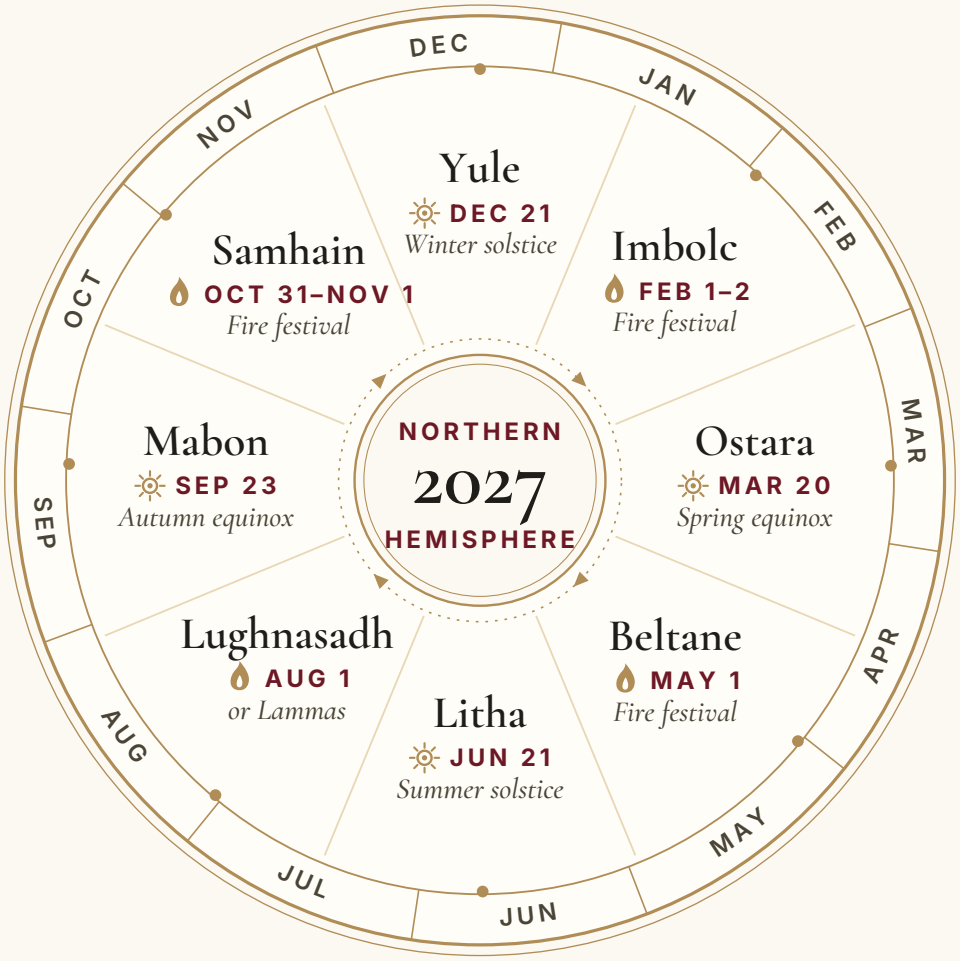


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The Wheel of the Year

2027 sabbat calendar

Old festivals, newer wheel: these eight were first joined together in the 1950s.



Gaelic fire festival (traditional date) · Solstice or equinox (2027 date)

Solstice and equinox dates are for 2027 in US Central Time (USNO). They shift by a day or so each year and can differ by time zone; fire-festival dates are traditional.

Southern Hemisphere: many practitioners shift the wheel six months, so Samhain falls around Apr 30–May 1.

THE EIGHT SABBATS · NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

What we actually know

Four Gaelic festivals plus the solstices and equinoxes, joined into one wheel in the 1950s by Gerald Gardner's and Ross Nichols's circles. Some parts are medieval. Some names are younger than disco.

I Samhain

OCT 31 – NOV 1

Gaelic fire festival

In medieval Irish writing, Samain marks the turn from the grazing season into winter, a time for gatherings and Otherworld tales set down by Christian scribes centuries later. Ronald Hutton argues the tidy "Celtic New Year" and "festival of the dead" labels owe more to Victorian-era scholars than to early sources.

II Yule

DEC 21, 2027

Winter solstice

Bede, writing in 725, says the Anglo-Saxons called the months around midwinter Giuli, a cousin of Norse jól. He adds Modranecht, "Mothers' Night," on what is now Christmas Eve, and frustratingly little about how either was kept.

III Imbolc

FEB 1 – 2

Gaelic fire festival

One of the four Gaelic seasonal festivals named in early medieval Irish texts, and later kept as St Brigid's Day. A medieval glossary explains the name as "ewe's milk"; Brigid's crosses and most other customs we know of come from much later folklore.

IV Ostara

MAR 20, 2027

Spring equinox

Bede says April, Eosturmonath, was named for a goddess, Eostre, and that one sentence is nearly all we know of her. Jacob Grimm reconstructed a German "Ostara" in 1835, and modern Pagans borrowed his spelling. The hares and eggs are later guesswork.

V Beltane

MAY 1

Gaelic fire festival

Beltaine opens summer in early medieval Irish texts, and Cormac's Glossary (around 900) says cattle were driven between two fires for protection. Maypoles belong to a separate English and Continental custom, recorded from the later Middle Ages.

VI Litha

JUN 21, 2027

Summer solstice

Midsummer bonfires, usually lit on St John's Eve (June 23), are well recorded across medieval and early modern Europe. "Litha" is Bede's Anglo-Saxon name for the June–July months; putting it on the sabbat is a modern choice.

VII Lughnasadh

(Lammas)

AUG 1

Medieval Irish tales say the god Lug founded this harvest gathering in memory of his foster-mother, Tailtiu. In England, Aug 1 was Lammas, "loaf-mass," when bread from the first wheat was blessed in church.

VIII Mabon

SEP 23, 2027

Autumn equinox

The name is modern: Aidan Kelly chose it in 1974, borrowing Mabon ap Modron from Welsh myth. Britain's old harvest suppers followed the last sheaf, not the calendar, and the equinox had no feast of its own. Then again, a name doesn't need to be old to be loved.

SOURCES Ronald Hutton, The Stations of the Sun (1996) and The Triumph of the Moon (1999); Nicholas Rogers, Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night (2002); Lisa Morton, Trick or Treat (2012); Kevin Danaher, The Year in Ireland (1972); Bede, The Reckoning of Time (725). Solstice and equinox dates: U.S. Naval Observatory, cross-checked with timeanddate.com.