

## Daylight Savings Time

### The Formula For Solving All Problems

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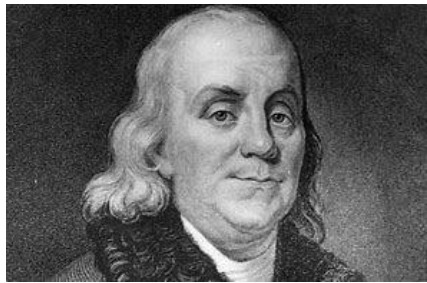
It's early May, which means that we've enjoyed several weeks of **Daylight Savings Time**. We take daylight savings time for granted because we are so used to it now. Yet it must rank among the most ingenious devices ever created by mankind. It is a very simple, creative solution to what was a serious problem.



*The problem?* We spend too many hours at work. By the time we get home, there are no (or few) hours of daylight left. Not enough to play a complete round of golf, or to shoot baskets with the neighborhood kids, or even bar-b-que a hamburger. Inadequate daylight recreation can lead to depression, obesity, heart disease, suicide and who knows what else.

*The solution?* Move all clocks back one hour.

A simple adjustment to the scale we use to measure the day and voila – one more hour of daylight. Benjamin Franklin thought of this idea<sup>1</sup> (sort of) and we all know what a genius he was.



This scale adjustment has many side benefits as well. Congress is even considering an extension of daylight savings time, to start in March and end into November. Why? Daylight savings time is an energy savings device. We consume more electricity in the dark (duh). By taking away an hour of darkness, we will consume less! Benjamin Franklin

thought of the same thing, except he was thinking about whale oil lamps, not nuclear power plants.

[As an aside, they haven't figured out the benefits of daylight savings time in Indiana<sup>2</sup>. Much of the state is on "fast time", and much on "slow time", and only Hoosiers can keep track of this.]

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.webexhibits.org/daylightsaving/franklin3.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theindychannel.com/news/local-news/indianas-complicated-history-with-daylight-saving-time>

It occurred to me how easy it would be to use a similar solution to solve many other problems, It is so obvious, I don't know why no one has considered this before. **Think about these examples:**

### **Global Warming**

**The problem?** We all know about global warming<sup>3</sup>, and the serious risk it poses for the world. (When I say “we all”, I’m excluding those folks in the oil industry and in the Bush Administration.) The problem is that our consumption of fossil fuels is heating up the atmosphere and causing a general global warming. This is pretty alarming stuff. Imagine what will happen if the polar caps melt and all of the extra water ends up in Miami.



The rest of the world is trying to address this problem, but we are still in denial here in the U.S.A. Americans do not want to admit global warming, since most of the solutions are painful to administer.

**The solution?** Apply the daylight savings time solution. Daylight savings time moved the clocks back one hour. We can solve global warming the same way – by moving our thermometers back ten degrees. What used to be 70°F will now be 60°F, what used to be 30°F will now be 20°F, and so on (you get the picture).

Voila. Dial down the thermometer and the world will get 10° cooler. Global warming will end and the polar ice caps will stay frozen.

The rest of the world could follow the American lead and adjust their thermometers as well. But since they are ahead of us in dealing with global warming, they would only need to dial down half as much. This also coincides with the Celsius scale<sup>4</sup>, where each degree is about half the size of a Fahrenheit degree. Thus the Celsius countries would only need to dial down 5° Celsius.

### **Fossil Fuel Depletion:**

**The problem?** As everyone in the civilized world knows (again, that is, everyone except those in the oil industry or in the Bush Administration), we are running out of fossil fuel. The world does

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<sup>3</sup> <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.livescience.com/39959-celsius.html>

not have an endless supply. We must either find alternative fuel sources or reduce our consumption of oil. One way to reduce consumption is to improve automobile fuel efficiency.



*The solution?* Apply the daylight savings solution. Daylight savings simply changed the scale for how we measure the day. Similarly, we can dramatically reduce fuel consumption by changing the scale for how we measure fuel.

The easiest way to do this is to adopt the “*imperial gallon*” as our official unit of measure.

To back up a step, American colonists used the same units of measurement as did the British. But Americans, being contrarians, defined the gallon a bit differently than the Brits. A U.S. gallon is about 0.833 British imperial gallons or, stated differently, an imperial gallon is about 20% larger than a U.S. gallon. I got used to this difference when I traveled in Canada, before Canadians got smart and converted to the metric system.

If Americans converted to the imperial gallon, we would immediately reduce our consumption of gasoline by 20%! A car that got 20 miles per gallon (using the old U.S. gallons) would get 24 miles per gallon (using the imperial gallon). A gas-guzzler, getting only 10 miles per gallon, would – using the imperial gallon – get 12 miles per gallon. Still not good, but at least it would be **20% better**.

There are only two flaws in this solution. First, it would only reduce our oil consumption, so it is only a short term solution. But it will give us more time to find and utilize alternative fuel sources. Second, Americans would not accept use of “imperial” gallons. It is far to regal. We would need to come up with a more appropriate name. Maybe the “American gallon”. Or, recognizing his daylight savings time genius, the “Franklin gallon”.

### **Social Security:**

*The problem?* Our President spent 60 days touring the country and telling us about the Social Security crisis<sup>5</sup>. The system will be bankrupt, he says, in 40 years or so. We need to come up with a solution or else we will not be able to continue benefits to the elderly.

There are many who disagree with this notion<sup>6</sup> that the system is heading into bankruptcy, and other that think the President’s proposal is no solution. The biggest problem with addressing the issue is that, like global warming, the solutions seem so painful. We likely have to either raise

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<sup>5</sup> <https://money.howstuffworks.com/personal-finance/financial-planning/social-security4.htm>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2005-01-16/social-security-crisis-what-crisis>

social security taxes, or delay or reduce benefits. Nobody (and especially no politician) likes to suggest either solution.



***The solution?*** Once again, the daylight savings time solution can be applied to social security. All we need to adjust is how we measure a “year”. We define a “year” as the time it takes for the earth to revolve around the sun. **What if, instead, we defined a “year” as two laps around the sun?**

If a “year” is two laps, then those people who are now 64, and on the verge of collecting social security, would become 32 and many years away from social security. Most of these people will die anyway before they reached 65 (130 in “old years”), so we would need to pay out fewer benefits. We could keep social security taxes at the same level and accumulate a huge social security surplus. No risk of bankruptcy whatsoever.

There would be some side benefits as well. We live in a youth oriented culture. By switching to the “new years”, everyone would become much, much younger.

We would also save considerable sums in health care. The elderly spend far more in health care costs than the young. In fact, the average health care costs for people over 65<sup>7</sup> is 3 to 5 times higher than for people under 65. A switch from “one lap years” to “two lap years” could cut costs by the same ratio.

High health care cost is also one of the reasons why American manufacturers have a difficult time competing with foreign enterprises. With the new years and the resulting health care savings, American manufacturers would flourish. No more exporting jobs to China! Can you imagine people buying American cameras, American electronics and American refrigerators?

Some people might say that the “new year” system reduces the frequency of birthdays and Holidays. But this can be resolved easily enough. People can simply celebrate birthdays and Holidays twice each year!

### **Other Applications:**

There are an unlimited number of applications to the daylight savings time principle.

We can fix the declining value of the dollar by moving our monetary system over by one decimal place. (We’ve previously addressed the importance of the decimal point<sup>8</sup> at the Café). This would eliminate the penny and the nickel, which no one likes to use anyway. The dime would be

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<sup>7</sup> <https://journalistsresource.org/studies/government/health-care/elderly-medical-spending-medicare/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.clandonnell.net/pages.php?tabid=439&pageid=3112&title=The+I.R.S.+Thinks+I+Forgot+About+%243+Million>

our lowest-valued coin. The “dollar” would be that bill with Alexander Hamilton on it. Right now, the American dollar is worth \$1.24 Canadian, 0.78 Euro and 105 Japanese yen. With the daylight savings solution, the American dollar would be worth 12.4 Canadian dollars, 7.8 Euros and 1050 Japanese yen!



See how easy this is?

**Remember, you read it here first.**

**DAYLIGHT  
SAVINGS**