

# Sampler



245 QUESTIONS  
FROM 2021

Questions, Answers, and  
Unbelievable Facts from the  
Passing Year

HOWSMART.NET



QUESTIONS  
TOPICS



World  
Politics



Business



Science



Tech



Places



Sports

# Welcome

**2021** was a year of change in the world. From climate change to technology. While the US saw a fresh start with the inauguration of President Joe Biden (and the first woman Vice President), in other parts of the world, dictators strengthened their grip through spreading fake news and increasingly violating human rights.

On the other hand, it was an excellent year for science and culture. Theaters finally reopened after the long pandemic break, three space missions landed on Mars, the world saw its first private space flights, Covid-19 vaccines proved effective, and superheroes became woke.

I hope this collection of stories and facts from 2021 serves as a helpful time capsule to educate and reminisce on the passing year.

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## WHY QUESTIONS?

There's nothing more intriguing than a question. Socrates thought of that first. Once the mind's intrigued, the answers (i.e., new facts) are more easily stored, and further questions arise, sparking our critical thinking process.

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## HOW TO USE THIS EBOOK?

Test and enrich your knowledge, utilize the contents index to reach your favorite subjects, print it (as ecologically as you can), rip it apart, make a trivia night out of it, zoom your friends, and screen-share the questions. You can even keep it unopened until 2031 ;-).

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## ABOUT THE CURATOR



Orr Knispel is a full-time journalist and part-time questions writer for TV, Trivia apps, and print, with experience of over 20 years covering current events.

HowSmart.net launched in 2020 as a news-based trivia quizzes website. I originally published the questions and answers in this eBook on the site's 2021 news quizzes. All answers are cross-checked with the most trusted news providers on the planet and relevant government agencies and NGOs. You'll find valuable and interesting clickable links on every page on this file.

# Questions

## Category:

# World Politics



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# 1. ACCORDING TO PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN, WHICH 'METEOR HEADED TO CRASH' INTO THE US ECONOMY?

Photo: [The White House](#), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Joe Biden denounced "reckless" Republicans for [pushing the US government towards a historic debt default](#) in a televised address on Monday, Oct. 4, 2021, warning: "[A meteor is headed to crash into our economy.](#)"

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## WHEN DID THE US EVER DEFAULT ON ITS DEBT?

The US Treasury has said it will be unable to pay its bills by around Oct. 18, 2021, unless Congress raises the current debt limit of \$28.4 trillion. [Failure could trigger the first US default in modern history.](#)

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## 2. IN THE US, WHAT IS THE MANN ACT?

Photo: [Luke Harold](#), CC0, via Wikimedia Commons



The Mann Act is [an anti-sex trafficking law that prohibits taking anyone across state lines](#) "for any immoral purpose."

### WAS R. KELLY CONVICTED OF SEX TRAFFICKING?

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R&B superstar R. Kelly, 54, was [convicted Monday, Sept. 27, 2021, in a sex trafficking trial](#). A jury of seven men and five women found [Kelly guilty of racketeering and sex trafficking \(violating the Mann Act\)](#). On [May 4, 2022, Kelly will be sentenced by the same federal judge who oversaw his trial in Brooklyn](#). The singer is also [facing sex-related charges in Illinois and Minnesota](#). Trial dates in those cases have yet to be set. Kelly had been tried once before, in Chicago in [a child pornography case, but was acquitted in 2008](#).

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3. WHICH LEADER WAS NAMED THE  
WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL WOMAN BY  
FORBES MAGAZINE FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS  
IN A ROW?

Photo: [Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz](#), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



German Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#) had remained at the top spot of [Forbes Magazine's The World's Most Powerful Women list since 2006, except for 2010](#) when the former U.S First Lady Michelle Obama temporarily replaced her, including the last ten years in a row. That's a total of 14 years at the top of the list.

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## 4. WHAT WAS THE MESSAGE PRINTED ON ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ'S DRESS AT THE 2021 MET GALA?

Screenshot: [NBC New York on YouTube](#)



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez famously [wore a white gown with the message "tax the rich" in red](#) to the 2021 New York Met Gala.

WHAT WERE OTHER SLOGANS WORN AT THE 2021 MET GALA?

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New York Representative [Carolyn B. Maloney came to the 2021 Met Gala draped in sashes stating "Equal Rights for Women."](#)

American [soccer player Megan Rapinoe carried a purse that reads "In Gay We Trust,"](#) and Cara Delevingne [wore a Dior vest, with "Peg the Patriarchy" printed in red.](#)

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## 5. WHAT IS INSULATE BRITAIN?

Photo: [Insulate Britain](#)



Insulate Britain is [an environmentalist protest group campaigning to force the British government to insulate Britain's leaky homes](#). The group argues that [since the UK has the oldest and least energy-efficient housing stock in Europe, improving the quality of British homes is fundamental to achieving the Government's climate change targets](#).

### HOW DID INSULATE BRITAIN ACTIVISTS DISRUPT TRAFFIC IN THE UK?

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Insulate Britain activists [stopped traffic on the British M25 road multiple times during the Sept. 13, 2021, week](#). The protestors [targeted the UK's busiest motorway and sat on the road, while stranded drivers beeped their horns](#). Police arrested a few dozens of protesters.



# Questions

## Category:

### Business and Technology



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## 6. WHAT ARE THE PANDORA PAPERS?



The Pandora Papers (not to be confused with the [Malta Files](#), [China Cables](#), or the [Global tobacco industry ICIJ investigation](#)) is a [global investigation on how the rich and powerful hide their investments](#) published by ICIJ - The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists - on Sunday, Oct. 3, 2021. The Pandora Papers include [more than 11.9 million records, amounting to about 2.94 terabytes of data](#). The investigation comes [five years after the ICIJ's Panama Papers investigation](#).

WHAT DID THE PANDORA PAPERS FIND?  
(IN 120 WORDS)

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- The Pandora Papers investigation found that [advisers helped King Abdullah II of Jordan set up at least three dozen shell companies from 1995 to 2017](#).
- They also discovered that [Tony Blair, U.K.'s former prime minister, became the owner of an \\$8.8 million Victorian building in 2017 by buying a British Virgin Islands company that held the property](#). The building now hosts the law firm of his wife, Cherie Blair.
- [Lebanon's billionaire prime minister, Najib Mikati, owns, according to the report, a Panama-based offshore company that he utilized to buy property in Monaco in 2008](#).
- The Washington Post revealed that the documents showed [Russian President Vladimir Putin's mistress had used offshore funds to buy a flat in Monaco](#).

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## 7. WHICH CITIES ARE AVAILABLE AT LAUNCH ON APPLE'S IPHONE'S NEW IOS 15 3D MAPS?

Image: Apple



Upon the release of Apple IOS 15 on Sept. 20, 2021, Apple Maps rolled out a new extra-detailed 3D map. [San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, and London](#) are the only cities available on the new [service](#) at launch.

WHAT ARE OTHER NEW FEATURES INCLUDED IN THE IOS 15 RELEASE?

FaceTime is getting some updates to [create a link to a FaceTime call that you can send to Windows and Android users](#) and [a new grid view, making FaceTime more viable for group video chats](#). Also added are new audio features to help your microphone zoom in on who's speaking and a blurred background portrait mode.

The new IOS also has [a new look for the Safari web browser, locating the URL address bar at the bottom of the screen](#), a [new Focus Mode](#), and [offline Siri abilities](#).

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8.

## WHICH FOOD PRODUCTS WERE IN SHORT SUPPLY IN THE UK IN 2021?

Screenshot: [MCDONALD'S UK ON YOUTUBE](#)



Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic sparked a [supply chain crisis in the United Kingdom](#) during 2021, leading to [scarcities of goods, including McDonald's milkshakes, Nando's chicken, and the Marmite breakfast spread.](#)

### UK BEER SHORTAGE NEWS

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Some [pubs in the UK are experiencing "supply problems,"](#) as a spokesman for pub chain Wetherspoon said Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. The beer shortage has been attributed to the ongoing [lack of 100,000 truck drivers around the country to transport goods,](#) a problem sparked by Britain's decision to leave the European Union. On Sept. 25, the British Department for Transport said that [5,000 fuel tanker and food truck drivers would be allowed to work in the country for three months](#) before Christmas to provide relief for the industry.

# Questions

## Category:

# Countries and Places



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## 9. HOW MANY CHILDREN ARE CHINESE COUPLES PERMITTED TO HAVE?

Photo: (c) Uwe Aranas, via Wikimedia



In [June 2021](#), The Chinese government announced [it would now allow all couples to have three children instead of two](#) while introducing new policies designed to reduce the financial burden of raising children.

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### ARE ABORTIONS ALLOWED IN CHINA?

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On Sept. 27, 2021, China announced it would [reduce the number of abortions performed for "non-medical purposes."](#) China has already enacted strict measures aimed at preventing sex-selective abortions. Although [China remains the world's most populous nation](#), the latest census showed [population growth from 2011 to 2020 was the slowest since the 1950s](#) and was expected to slow even more in the coming years.

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# 10. WHICH PARIS MONUMENT GOT WRAPPED IN 2021?

Photo: Chabe01, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons



On Sept. 12, 2021, a team of 95 rope technicians began [wrapping Paris's Arc de Triomphe](#) in 25,000 sq. meters of material, concluding a [60-year project for the artist Christo](#).

## WHO WAS CHRISTO?

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The Bulgarian-born [Christo Vladimirov Javacheff and his French wife Jeanne-Claude](#) worked together under the name Christo. In 1995 they [famously wrapped the Reichstag in Berlin for two weeks](#), drawing five million spectators. Ten years earlier, they oversaw [the wrapping of the Pont Neuf in Paris](#). Christo died in May 2020, while his wife died in 2009.

## WHY IS PARIS'S ARC DE TRIOMPHE WRAPPED IN 2021?

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The late Christo couple left detailed drawings and instructions for [the Arc de Triomphe to be wrapped in recyclable polypropylene fabric in silvery blue and red rope](#). The idea was revived in 2017 to [coincide with a Christo exhibition displayed in multiple Paris galleries starting Sept. 2021](#). "L'Arc de Triomphe, Wrapped" will be [on view for 16 days from Saturday, September 18 to Sunday, October 3, 2021](#).

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# 11. WHAT'S IN LONDON'S 60 COLEHERNE COURT, NEAR KING'S ROAD?

Image: Google Maps



60 Coleherne Court, near London's King's Road, is [the apartment where Princess Diana lived between 1979 and 1981 until she married Prince Charles.](#)

On Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2021, the house [was honored with a blue plaque.](#) The honor comes in [the year when Diana Spencer would have celebrated her 60th birthday.](#)

## WHAT ARE LONDON'S BLUE PLAQUES?

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Since 1876, [London's blue plaques](#) [commemorate historical figures who lived in London.](#) There are approximately 970 official plaques in the British capital, including the [London homes of writers Raymond Chandler and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle](#) and [Rock star Freddie Mercury.](#)

Princess Diana, who died in 1997, is [the highest-profile former member of the monarchy to be bestowed the honor.](#)



# Questions

## Category:

## Sports



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## 12. HOW MANY WORLD CUPS HAS BRAZIL STAR NEYMAR PLAYED?

Screenshot: DAZN ES on YouTube



Brazil star striker [Neymar has so far played at two World Cups](#). In 2014, he picked up [a back injury in the quarterfinals against Colombia](#). In 2018 Neymar had just returned from a severe foot injury and turned in a disappointing performance in the quarterfinals.

### WILL NEYMAR PLAY THE 2022 WORLD CUP?

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Neymar, 29, says in the documentary "[Neymar Jr. & The Line Of Kings](#)" that [the 2022 World Cup in Qatar could be the last of his career](#). "I am facing it like the last World Cup because I don't know whether I will be able to, mentally, to endure more soccer," he says. [Watch a clip from the docu.](#)

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# 13. WHICH COUNTRY WON THE MOST OLYMPIC MEDALS IN THE TOKYO 2020 GAMES?

Screenshot: Tokyo 2020 Closing Ceremony / Eurosport



Team [USA collected one-third of all of the medals handed at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics](#) - with a total of 113 medals, 39 of them golden. Team [China came second with 88 medals](#), 38 of them gold. [Japan had its all-time national medal collecting record](#), with 58 medals, out of which 27 golds.

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# 14. WHAT WAS ENGLAND'S HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THE 2020 UEFA EURO?

Screenshot: UEFA on YouTube



On the 2020 Euros (taking place in July 2021), England became [the first team to top a group at a Euro finals by scoring just two goals.](#)

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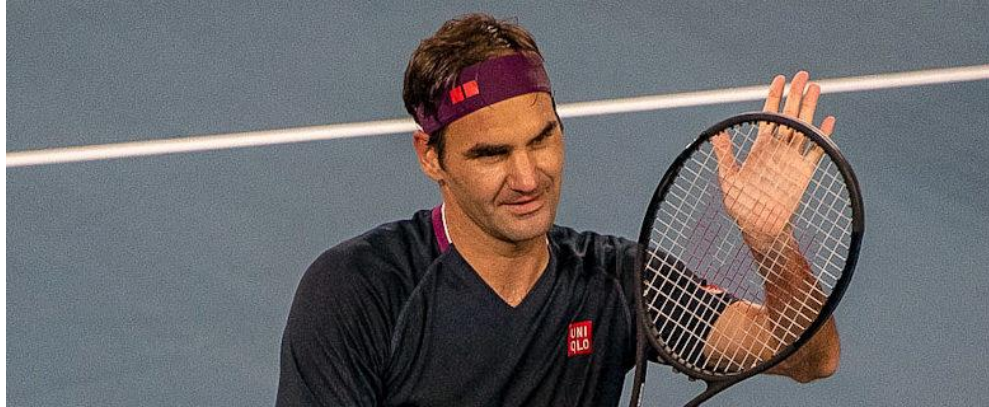
## ENGLAND EUROS 2020 BONUS FACTS

England achieved another historic moment when [they won their opening group game at a Euro for the first time at their ninth attempt.](#) Their quarter-final victory against Ukraine was the first time England had scored four goals in a knockout stage match of a major tournament since the final of the FIFA World Cup in 1966. It was [the first time in 55 years England reached a major tournament final.](#) Their last yielding victory was against West Germany to [win the 1966 World Cup.](#)

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# 15. WHO IS THE OLDEST MALE ATHLETE TO EVER MAKE IT TO THE WIMBLEDON QUARTERFINALS IN THE MODERN OPEN ERA?

Photo: Rob Keating, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons



39-Year-old [Roger Federer broke the age record for quarterfinalists in the Open era](#) (since 1968) held by Ken Rosewall, who was also 39 when he reached the last eight in 1974. [Rosewall was 39 years, 224 days old on the final day of the '74 Wimbledon tournament, while Federer was 39 years, 337 days old on the last day of this year's event.](#)

## ROGER FEDERER 2021 FACT

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[Roger Federer's bid for a ninth Wimbledon title was over](#) on July 8, 2021, after Hubert Hurkacz won against him in the quarter-finals. The defeat marked [his first straight-set loss at Wimbledon in 19 years and could turn out to be his final appearance at the grass-court Grand Slam.](#)

On Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021, Federer announced on a [video posted to his Instagram account](#) that he will [miss the 2021 U.S. Open because he needs more knee surgery.](#)

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