

# Jury Trivia: test your classmates

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## **Question 1: What was the shortest time taken by a jury to make its decision?**

Answer: Unbelievably, one minute! According to Guinness World Records, on 22 July 2004 Nicholas McAllister was acquitted in New Zealand's Greymouth District Court of growing cannabis plants. The jury left to consider the verdict at 3.28pm and returned at 3.29 pm.

(Guinness World Records, (2015) Shortest jury deliberation. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/shortest-jury-deliberation/>)

## **Question 2: What was the longest running jury trial?**

Answer: Reportedly *Frances E. Kemner et al. v. Monsanto Co.*, Case No. 80-L-970, heard in the 20th Circuit, State of Illinois, USA. The case ran for over four years with over 600 days of actual trial days on record.

(Griggs, L., (23 March 1987) In Illinois: The Longest Jury Trial Drones On, by Lee Griggs, *Time magazine*. Retrieved 17 April 2015 from <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,963829,00.html>)

## **Question 3: When was the first jury trial held in Australia?**

Answer: The first trials by civilian juries of 12 were held in the colony of New South Wales in 1824 (in what were called Quarter Session trials). Criminal trial juries with 12 members were introduced in the New South Wales Supreme Court in 1833.

(Chesterman, M., (1999) Criminal trial juries in Australia: From penal colonies to federal democracy. *Law and contemporary problems*, 62(2), 69-102. Retrieved 17 April from [2015http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1126&context=lcp](http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1126&context=lcp))

## **Question 4: What happens if a juror needs to use the bathroom during evidence?**

Answer: It's important to plan ahead when you might be in a courtroom for hours on end. Jurors typically have their own bathroom near the courtroom. However court has to be adjourned if you need to go. Best to try and avoid that embarrassment!

(Hickman, L., (22 February 2013) 10 things that jurors need to know. *The Guardian*. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://www.theguardian.com/law/shortcuts/2013/feb/21/10-things-jurors-need-to-know>)

## **Question 5: How many movies have been made about juries?**

Answer: More than 600. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) shows 431 movie titles have the word "jury" associated with them. Around another 200 relate to grand juries, jury service, jury rooms, jury selection etc.

(IMDb, (2015) Display results for "juries". Retrieved 4 March 2015 from [http://www.imdb.com/find?ref\\_=nv\\_sr\\_fn&q=juries&s=kw](http://www.imdb.com/find?ref_=nv_sr_fn&q=juries&s=kw))

**Question 6: Is it fact or fiction that jurors have to swear an oath on the Bible in Queensland?**

Answer: Fiction. The process is called ‘swearing in’ but jurors can swear an oath or make an affirmation or pledge to fulfil jury duty. Each person can choose to swear on the Bible or another religious book.

(Queensland Government, (2014) Myths about jury duty. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/court/jury-duty/myths-about-jury-duty/>)

**Question 7: How many jurors provided judgement on cases in the people’s court of Ancient Greece?**

Answer: The smallest recorded jury numbered 201, but usually juries comprised 500 members. For more important or controversial cases, as many as 2001 jurors deliberated. Cases were decided by majority rule.

(Mueller, J., (n.d.) The jury in a court of law in Ancient Greece. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://classroom.synonym.com/jury-court-law-ancient-greece-12337.html>)

**Question 8: What is the most money a jury has awarded in personal-injury damages?**

Answer: A jury awarded US\$163,882,660 to Shiyamala Thirunayagam, aged 27, in the Supreme Court of the State of New York on 27 July 1993. She was almost completely paralysed after her car hit a truck that had broken down in the fast lane of one of the USA’s busiest highways. She agreed to accept a lower lump sum of US\$8,230,000 and a guarantee that the defendants would pay up to US\$55,000,000 for future medical expenses. (In Queensland, juries do not determine the amount of damages in civil cases).

(Guinness World Records, (2015) Greatest payout for personal injury damages to an individual. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/greatest-payout-for-personal-injury-damages-to-an-individual>)

**Question 9: What is the longest jail sentence given to a single person on multiple counts?**

Answer: In December 1994 a judge in Oklahoma City, USA, sentenced child rapist Charles Scott Robinson to 30,000 years, the jury having recommended 5,000 years for each of the six counts against him. (In Queensland, life is the longest sentence, and the judge determines the sentence not the jury).

(Guinness World Records, (2015) Longest jail sentence (multiple counts). Retrieved 4 March 2015 from [http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/longest-jail-sentence-\(multiple-counts\)](http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/longest-jail-sentence-(multiple-counts)))

**Question 10: What was the first jury trial to be broadcast on US TV?**

Answer: The 1977 trial of *Florida v Zamora* involved a 15 year old boy accused of murdering an elderly neighbour. The trial attracted international attention because an insanity plea of ‘television intoxication’ was used for the first degree murder, burglary, robbery, and

possession of a firearm charges. The defence was unsuccessful and Zamora was convicted on all counts by a jury of 9 men and 3 women.

(Sarasota Herald Times, (8 October 1977) Florida v Zamora: Impact on TV overwhelming, p.1. Retrieved 17 April 2015 from <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1755&dat=19771008&id=sMEqAAAAIBAJ&sjid=bGcEAAAIBA J&pg=6831,3081330&hl=en>; Open jurist, (1987) Zamora v L. Dugger. Retrieved April 17 from <http://openjurist.org/834/f2d/956/zamora-v-l-dugger>)

**Question 11: Which famous historical document helped secure trial by jury in the English legal system and in turn influenced many other countries' legal systems?**

Answer: The Magna Carta issued by King John of England in 1215 established the principle that everybody was subject to the law. Most famously, the 39th clause gave all 'free men' the right to justice and a fair trial by stating 'No free man shall be seized or imprisoned ... except by the lawful judgement of his equals ...'

(Breay, C. & Harrison, J. (n.d). Magna Carta: an introduction. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/magna-carta-an-introduction>; Jury system in the dock, (13 January 2000) *BBC News UK*. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/601690.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/601690.stm))

**Question 12: Does everyone now have the right to a jury trial in the British and Australian courts?**

Answer: In the United Kingdom the absolute right was overturned by the Criminal Justice Act in 2003. It allows prosecutors to apply for a non-jury trial. In June 2009 the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Judge, became the first judge to order such a trial in the UK. Most states in Australia also now allow judge-only trials for special reasons.

(QI, (2015) Jury. Retrieved 17 April 2015 from <http://qi.com/infocloud/jury>; O'Leary, J. (n.d.) Criminal law and procedure. Retrieved 17 May 2015 from <http://crimb.weebly.com/judge-alone.html>)

**Question 13: What is the largest group of potential jurors called for a trial in the US?**

Answer: The largest jury pool was 9,000 for the Colorado trial of James Holmes, accused of murdering 12 and injuring seven in a 2012 attack at a movie theatre. The judge said he set such a large number of potential jurors because it was a high profile, death penalty case.

(Mangan, F., Burke, K.D., & Acuna, A. (20 January 2015) Largest jury pool in US history gathered as Colo. movie gunman James Holmes' trial begins. *Fox News*. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2015/01/20/jury-selection-to-begin-in-colorado-theater-shooting-trial/>)

**Question 14: When were Australian women given the right to be jurors and which state allowed this first?**

Answer: In 1923 jury service was introduced for women in Queensland – the first state in Australia to do so.

(AWAVA, (2003) Introduction of jury service for women in Queensland. Retrieved 4 March 2015 from <http://timeline.awava.org.au/archives/342>)

**Question 15: What countries did away with juries in the 1960s?**

Answer: India, Singapore and South Africa.

(Vander Hook, S., (2011) *Democracy*. Minnesota: ABDO Publishing Company)

**Question 16: Are all criminal juries made up of 12 people?**

Answer: No, the number of jurors used in jury trials varies. In Australia, the U.S. and the U.K. criminal juries are made up of 12 jurors; in Germany they can be 2 or 3 laypersons with a Judge/s; in Brazil, it's 7; in Norway, it's 10; in Greece, it's 10; in France, it's 9 laypersons with Judge/s. The U.S. calls its juries 'Petite Juries' to distinguish them from Grand Juries.

(National Constitution Center, (1999) A comparative analysis of jury research. Retrieved 4 June 2015 from [http://web.archive.org/web/20020214172013/http://constitutioncenter.org/sections/teacher/lesson\\_plans/html/71189ag.asp](http://web.archive.org/web/20020214172013/http://constitutioncenter.org/sections/teacher/lesson_plans/html/71189ag.asp); Juries (2015) Wikipedia. Retrieved 4 June 2015 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jury#Australia>)

**Question 17: Are most court cases heard before a judge and jury?**

Answer: No, more than 90 per cent of all criminal trials are heard by a magistrate alone. Of the cases that are heard in the Supreme Court of Queensland and the District Court of Queensland less than one in ten of all criminal matters each year goes before a jury.

(Queensland Law Reform Commission, (2011) A Review of Jury Selection. Retrieved 17 May 2015 from [http://www.qlrc.qld.gov.au/reports/r68.pdf](http://www qlrc.qld.gov.au/reports/r68.pdf))

**Question 18: Have there been any major mix-ups in jury summonses?**

Answer: Yes, in Massachusetts, a cat named Sal was summoned for jury duty because its owners had listed it in the U.S. census.

(OMG, (2015) A cat in Boston was summonsed for jury duty. Retrieved 17 May 2015 from <http://www.omgfacts.com/lists/5496/A-cat-in-Boston-was-summoned-for-jury-duty-ab572-0>)

**Question 19: What famous people have been called for jury duty?**

Answer: In the U.S. President Barack Obama was called for Cook County jury duty in 2010 but was excused because he was due to deliver the State of the Union address. Other famous people who've served as jurors include: Rudolph Giuliani, Woody Allen, Marisa Tomei, Donald and Ivana Trump, Henry Kissinger, Calvin Klein, Robert De Niro and Tom Wolfe.

(Belson, K., (2008) Celebrities: they're just like us! They have to do jury duty! *New York Times*. Retrieved 17 April 2015 from [http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/01/celebrities-theyre-just-like-us-they-have-jury-duty/?\\_r=0](http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/01/celebrities-theyre-just-like-us-they-have-jury-duty/?_r=0); Jacob, M. & Benzkofer S., (2012) 10 things you might not know about juries, *Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved 17 April 2015 from [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-09-16/opinion/ct-perspec-0916-things-20120916\\_1\\_jury-summons-longest-jury-deliberations-bribe-jurors](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-09-16/opinion/ct-perspec-0916-things-20120916_1_jury-summons-longest-jury-deliberations-bribe-jurors))

