

词汇: *time* 时间

‘**Time waits for no man**’ – or so the saying goes. We can’t stop time and we can’t control it, although sometimes, in our minds, we think **time flies** – for example, when the weekend arrives, we feel it’s over **in no time!** But if this year in particular feels like it’s passing more quickly than others have done, there could be a scientific explanation why.

Of course, we know a year is usually 365 days long. Clever scientists **calculated** this a long time ago. They also worked out that every four years, we need an extra day to keep our calendar **in sync** – this is called a **leap year**. But 2021 isn’t one of those years, and yet it’s not behaving like a normal year. Scientists and astrophysicists have **done the math** and discovered the Earth is moving faster than it ever has in the last 50 years. This means that 2021 is going to be the shortest year in decades.

Apparently, this is because the Earth is spinning faster on its axis, quicker than it has done in decades, and the days are therefore shorter. But they are only short by a tiny amount – around 0.05 **milliseconds** – so don’t panic if you haven’t noticed! However, long-term these milliseconds **add up**. Astrophysicist Graham Jones and Konstantin Bikos from Time and Date told The Independent newspaper: “If the Earth’s rotation continues to quicken, we may at some point require a **negative leap second**. If this happens, our clocks would skip a second in order to **keep up with the hurrying Earth**.” Since 1972, 27 leap seconds have only been added to our time and none have been taken away.

This really is only of concern for **atomic clocks** – the most **accurate timekeeping** devices in history. Studying the Earth’s rotation and then subtracting or adding a leap second to these clocks can ensure they remain **aligned** and keep us **on time**. But now, maybe we need to get a move on before this ‘shorter’ year is gone **in a split second!**

词汇表

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| time waits for no man | 时间不等人 |
| time flies | 光阴似箭，时光飞逝 |
| in no time | 很快，立刻 |
| calculate | 计算 |
| in sync | 同步的 |
| leap year | 闰年 |
| do the math | 进行计算 |
| millisecond | 毫秒 |
| add up | 积少成多 |
| negative leap second | 负闰秒 |
| keep up with | 跟上，不落后于… |
| hurrying | 急忙（做某事）的，这里指地球自转速度快的 |
| atomic clock | 原子钟 |
| accurate | 精准的，准确的 |
| timekeeping | 计时 |
| aligned | 校准的 |
| on time | 准时的 |
| in a split second | 在一刹那，在一瞬间 |

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why do we have an extra day every four years, known as a 'leap year'?
2. How much shorter is 2021 calculated to be?
3. True or False? *A leap second might have to be subtracted from time for the first time ever.*
4. What are the most important devices for accurate timekeeping?
5. When was the last 'short' year?

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I tried to _____ how much the holiday had cost me, but I kept losing count!

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|-------------|---------|
| calculate | align | do the math | in sync |
|-----------|-------|-------------|---------|

2. Late again! If you want to keep your job, you need to do something about your _____.

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|---------|--------------|
| timekeeping | timekeeper | keptime | timeskeeping |
|-------------|------------|---------|--------------|

3. The homemade cakes went _____ – I'll have to bake some more!

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| in the split second | in a split seconds | at a split second | in a split second |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

4. I tripped up and cut my leg because I was _____ for the bus.

| | | | |
|---------|----------|---------|------------|
| aligned | hurrying | in sync | time flies |
|---------|----------|---------|------------|

5. We were having so much fun the _____, and before we knew it, it was time to go home.

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| time flies | time flying | time flew | time flewed |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|

答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why do we have an extra day every four years, known as a 'leap year'?

We have an extra day in a leap year to keep our calendar in sync.

2. How much shorter is 2021 calculated to be?

It's expected to be shorter by around 0.05 milliseconds.

3. True or False? *A leap second might have to be subtracted from time for the first time ever.*

True. Since 1972, 27 leap seconds have only been added to our time and none have been taken away.

4. What are the most important devices for accurate timekeeping?

Atomic clocks are the most accurate timekeeping devices in history.

5. When was the last 'short' year?

It's not said, but Earth is moving faster than it ever has in the last 50 years. This means that 2021 is going to be the shortest year in decades.

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I tried to **calculate** how much the holiday had cost me, but I kept losing count!

2. Late again! If you want to keep your job, you need to do something about your **timekeeping**.

3. The homemade cakes went **in a split second** – I'll have to bake some more!

4. I tripped up and cut my leg because I was **hurrying** for the bus.

5. We were having so much fun the **time flew**, and before we knew it, it was time to go home.