

# Do Americans Need a Weekly Day of Rest?

For many who work in the world of desks and offices, the idea of going to work on a Sunday is rather incomprehensible, except perhaps when under the pressure of an urgent deadline. But for those who work in industries such as retail or service, Sunday has become just another day.

Nowhere is this more visible than in Walmart's decision to fully discontinue extra pay for employees who work on Sunday. As [The Washington Post](#) reports, Walmart is simply following the lead of others in the retail industry:

*“‘To get people to work, when they'd never worked before, they started to pay Sunday pay,’ says Craig Rowley, a retail compensation consultant with Korn Ferry, who has done work for Walmart.*

*That changed over time as women entered the workforce, pushing more shopping from weekdays to the weekend. The labor market also loosened up, meaning workers couldn't pick and choose which days they wanted to work; **Sunday shifts are now expected rather than optional.** And meanwhile, the importance of Sunday as a universal day of rest started to recede from the American psyche.”*

As the *WaPo* goes on to note, such a change has come at the expense of two other major American institutions, namely, church and family:

*“‘When I was growing up, Sundays were kind of family day, church day,’ Rowley says. ‘As we've gotten to be a more secular society, staying at home on Sunday is not necessarily expected. “We're all going to be here all day Sunday” is not as strong a cultural norm.’”*

But as research shows, those cultural norms play an important role in the make-up of our country, particularly in the lives of the next generation. Children who grow up in intact families (i.e. two parents) [do better](#) academically, behaviorally, and psychologically. Similarly, children whose parents [make church a priority](#) have been found to be more responsible, creative, and more eager about learning.

If society continues to turn Sunday into just another day of the week, will we see the further decay of institutions which have generally been considered as the glue which holds that society together? Religious or not, do Americans need one day a week to step away from routine, [rest, and have time to recharge](#) with those they love?

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