

Glastonbury Festival

Every summer, music lovers get excited about the UK's biggest music festival! Find out all about it in this article.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. a performance
2. a site
3. a stage
4. a festival-goer
5. mud
6. to recover
7. waste
8. renewable energy

Definition

- a. a place where something is or something happens
- b. a person who goes to a festival
- c. a platform higher than the ground, where people sing, act or dance for people to watch
- d. a show by actors, singers or dancers
- e. a type of power that is natural (e.g. from the sun or wind) and almost unlimited
- f. rubbish and other unwanted or unneeded things
- g. to become healthy again
- h. a mix of earth and water

Glastonbury Festival

In the UK there are festivals for every kind of music you can imagine, but the most famous festival of all is Glastonbury Festival.

What is Glastonbury Festival?

It's a huge festival that takes place at Worthy Farm, in the countryside near the town of Glastonbury in south-west England. It began in 1970 when Michael Eavis, a local farmer, organised a small music festival on his farm. Back then, tickets cost £1 and they included free milk from the farm! Today, the festival is run by Eavis's youngest daughter, Emily Eavis, and it has grown into a five-day festival with around 200,000 people attending. Tickets normally sell out minutes after going on sale, but if you can't get a ticket, you can still watch the performances live on television. The festival staff are volunteers, and every year it raises millions of pounds for charity.

What is the festival experience like?

The festival site is enormous, the size of over 500 football pitches. Festival-goers camp on the festival site and they can choose from different areas with different atmospheres. Some are quiet, some are lively and some are for families. The site has food stalls, bars, toilets, a medical centre, a church, a cinema, recycling facilities and much more. Glastonbury even has its own newspaper printed on the site!

What kind of music is there?

You can hear rock, pop, hip-hop and many other kinds of music. The biggest stage is called the Pyramid Stage, and that is where the most famous bands and singers play, which have included the Rolling Stones, Shakira, Beyoncé and Coldplay. On smaller stages you can see less famous artists. In total there are thousands of performances over the five days of the festival, on over a hundred stages. Apart from music, you can also see comedy, theatre and circus performances.

How about the festival's environmental impact?

Glastonbury promotes environmental protection. The festival site uses solar power, wind power and other renewable energies to reduce its environmental impact, and power generators on the site use fuel made from waste cooking oil. To reduce waste on the site, reusable or compostable plates and cups are used instead of plastic ones, and single-use plastic bottles aren't allowed. The festival even takes a break once every five or six years to let the land and local people recover from the huge festival.

How about the weather?

We can't talk about Glastonbury without talking about the weather. The festival is in June, but the weather is unpredictable, with rain and storms sometimes. People still have fun by splashing around in the water and mud!

Tasks

Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. Glastonbury Festival takes place ...
 - a. in a big city.
 - b. in the countryside.
 - c. in a theatre.
2. The organisers of the festival are ...
 - a. volunteers.
 - b. family members.
 - c. famous musicians.

3. Tickets for Glastonbury are ...
 - a. very cheap.
 - b. free.
 - c. hard to get.
4. There are thousands of ...
 - a. performances.
 - b. football pitches.
 - c. stages.
5. If you go to the festival, you can't ...
 - a. buy single-use plastic bottles.
 - b. use any cooking oil.
 - c. camp on the festival site.
6. The festival takes place ...
 - a. once every five to six years.
 - b. only if the weather is good.
 - c. in June.

Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

perform	reduce	watch	camp
go	raise	have	recover

1. About 200,000 people to Glastonbury Festival every year.
2. People usually instead of staying in a hotel.
3. Many different artists at the festival, from big stars to less famous singers and bands.
4. The festival can huge amounts of money for charity.
5. The festival organisers try to its environmental impact.
6. The festival-goers fun, even in the rain.
7. The festival occasionally takes a break to help the land to
8. You can also Glastonbury performances on television.

Discussion

Have you ever been to a music festival? Are there any music festivals where you live?

Answers

Preparation task

1. d
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. h
6. g
7. f
8. e

Task 1

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. a
6. c

Task 2

1. go
2. camp
3. perform
4. raise
5. reduce
6. have
7. recover
8. watch