

20 facts about the Amish

UNIT 1

Worksheet n°02

- 1.** While most Amish in North America reside in the U.S., there have been Canadian Amish settlements since the 1800s. Around 5,000 of them live in Canada in about a dozen communities, mostly in Ontario. Many Amish migrated to Canada in the late 1930s and early 1940s to avoid military conscription.
- 2.** Baptism in the Amish community generally happens between 18 and 22 years old. Until this happens, no one is allowed to marry and when they do, it must be to another church member.
- 3.** The Amish are pacifists who reject any form of violence and cannot be in the military.
- 4.** Amish dolls have no face. They are believed to prevent pride and vanity.
- 5.** The Amish do not play any musical instruments, claiming they are a method of self-expression, which would encourage pride, and feelings of superiority.
- 6.** The Amish can be excluded from the community. It is called “shunning”. In some serious cases, members are excommunicated and banished. Even parents must avoid contact if their child has been excommunicated. If they do not comply, they in turn may be excommunicated.
- 7.** Amish women are homemakers. Their role is to look after the household, which includes cooking, home chores, and helping neighbours.
- 8.** In public, Amish women will generally follow their husband’s lead.
- 9.** The Amish cannot use motorized vehicles. They generally use horse-drawn buggies.
- 10.** You can tell whether an Amish man is married or not by looking at his beard. An Amish man begins growing his beard immediately after his wedding.
- 11.** Amish women use their wedding outfit for Sunday church services after they are married.
- 12.** Amish children are taught by Amish teachers. Later on, they start vocational training with their family and members of the community where they learn farming and carpentry skills.
- 13.** No matter where people come from in the USA or if they come from another country, every person who is not Amish is referred to as an “English person”.
- 14.** Most Amish are opposed to being photographed, although some agree if it is taken in a natural setting or if their faces are hidden.
- 15.** An estimated 80-90% of Amish children stay within the church when they grow up. This means that the Amish population doubles in size every 20 years.
- 16.** Those who wish to join the Amish community must go through a specific process: they must learn the Pennsylvania German dialect; they must leave behind their previous lifestyle; after some time, the Amish vote on whether to admit them.
- 17.** Every Amish speaks three languages: German, English and Pennsylvania Dutch.
- 18.** The Amish consider everyone as equal. That is why they are dressed the same.
- 19.** The Amish do not use cameras or phones, but they do not paint people either. Having a photo or a painting of someone is considered a religious idol and it is not allowed.
- 20.** An Amish child completes his/her school education after they complete the 8th grade (equivalent to France’s 4^e). Boys choose a job for life and girls become housekeepers.

