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The 2026 proclamation

On a summer day in 2025, a royal proclamation appointed the early May holiday for 2026. It never used the words “May Day.”

The proclamation was given at Buckingham Palace on 9 July 2025, and published in the London Gazette on 11 July (notice 4918071, issue 64793, page 13914). It appointed Thursday 1 January 2026, Monday 4 May 2026, and Monday 28 December 2026 — in place of Saturday 26 December — as bank holidays in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It also appointed Monday 13 July 2026 in Northern Ireland.

The authority given is sections 1(2) and 1(3) of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971. The notice does not name Monday 4 May as May Day, or as the Early May bank holiday, and it does not appoint a Scottish holiday. GOV.UK, on a separate official page, still lists Monday 4 May 2026 as the Early May bank holiday — including in the Scotland table.

Why a proclamation at all?

Some bank holidays sit in an Act of Parliament. Others are appointed, year by year, under that Act. Monday 4 May 2026, for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, is one of the appointed days.

A short quiz

1. Which Monday in May 2026 did the proclamation appoint?
2. Does the proclamation call that Monday May Day?
3. Does the same notice appoint a Scottish holiday?

Answers. 1. Monday 4 May 2026. 2. No. 3. No; the Scottish listing for that Monday is on the GOV.UK table, not in this proclamation.

Wording from The Gazette, notice 4918071, published 11 July 2025, and from GOV.UK, “UK bank holidays,” checked 17 November 2026.
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