

THE ULTIMATE

LISTS
BOOK

**Amaze Yourself and Your
Friends with over 200 Lists
of Unusual and Totally
Bizarre Trivia**

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Lists
BOOK**

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**Over 250
fascinating lists to amaze
you and your friends**

COMPILED BY GEOFF TIBBALLS



THIS IS A CARLTON BOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Most of us are slaves to lists — whether it be shopping lists, lists of jobs to do, lists of things to take on holiday or lists of places to see when we get there. Only the Leaning Tower of Pisa has a greater list than the average Briton. And if we're not making lists, we're reading lists compiled by other people — checking the music charts, seeing who's top of the batting averages, flicking through the magazine listings or monitoring our children's education via the school league tables.

Books of lists have been popular since *The Domesday Book*. So why are people so fascinated with them? It is principally because they present information in an easily-digestible format and contain the sort of quirky material not found in standard reference books. *THE BEST BOOK OF LISTS EVER!* follows in that noble tradition, offering a wealth of readily-accessible trivia on every major topic under the sun — including sport, the cinema, natural history, music, inventions, television, crime, history, transport, language and geography.

Here you'll find lists to start and end arguments. What better way of passing an evening in the pub than to ask your friends to name 20 songs where the title doesn't appear in the lyrics? It's not as easy as it sounds. Or how about ten songs with a fruit in the title? Ten famous people who suffered from piles? Ten celebrities who once had soccer trials?

With some 300 lists in total, it is a book you can dip into any time, anywhere. Keep a copy on the bedside table or in the loo for those quiet moments of meditation. But be warned: you could be locked in there for hours as your thirst for useless knowledge knows no bounds.

Geoff Tibballs.

CHAPTER

1

PEOPLE

20 FIRST JOBS OF THE FAMOUS

1. SYLVESTER STALLONE – lion-cage cleaner.
2. WARREN BEATTY – rat-catcher.
3. ERROL FLYNN – sheep-castrator.
4. SEAN CONNERY – French polisher for coffin-maker.
5. CYNDI LAUPER – dog-kennel cleaner.
6. MICK JAGGER – porter at a mental hospital.
7. BETTE MIDLER – pineapple-chunker.
8. ROD STEWART – grave-digger.
9. JEFFREY ARCHER – deckchair attendant.
10. BILL WITHERS – aircraft toilet seat manufacturer.
11. RUSS ABBOTT – hearse driver.
12. MICHAEL DOUGLAS – petrol-pump attendant.
13. JON BON JOVI – Christmas decoration-maker.
14. JACK NICHOLSON – mailing boy.
15. OZZY OSBOURNE – slaughterhouse labourer.
16. ROCK HUDSON – vacuum cleaner salesman.
17. STING – filing clerk with the Inland Revenue.
18. BURT LANCASTER – lingerie salesman.
19. EDITH PIAF – wreath-maker.
20. JOE COCKER – gas fitter.

Warren Beatty's big theatre break came when he was 17 – but it was actually outside the theatre, in the alleyway. The National Theater, Washington DC, had been plagued by rats. Equity pressed the management to hire an official rat-catcher and young Beatty, desperate for a job in the theatre, landed the role.

20 CELEBRITY SACKINGS

1. **GEORGE MICHAEL.** Sacked from his Saturday job at British Home Stores for not wearing a shirt and tie in the stockroom.
2. **MADONNA.** Sacked from New York fast-food restaurant Dunkin' Donuts for squirting jam at a customer.
3. **MICKEY ROURKE.** Sacked from his job as a cinema usher after getting into a brawl with a colleague.
4. **ELVIS PRESLEY.** Sacked from his \$30-a-week job at the Precision Tool Company, Memphis, in 1951 when his bosses discovered that, although his long hair suggested he was much older, he was really only 15 and therefore under-age.
5. **VIC REEVES.** Sacked from his job on a pig farm near Darlington because he wasn't strong enough to carry two hundredweight of corn. The farmer replaced him with a stronger lad. Vic's erratic tractor-driving may also have contributed to his downfall. He once demolished 100 yards of fencing and on another occasion reversed into a pig-sty.
6. **BOY GEORGE.** Sacked from his job as a shelf-stacker at Tesco for wearing the store's carrier bags. Tesco deemed his appearance 'disturbing'.
7. **VINCENT VAN GOGH.** Sacked from his job as assistant to a Paris art dealer for sneaking off to Holland at Christmas and for being rude to customers.
8. **ROGER MOORE.** Sacked as office boy with London cartoon-makers Publicity Picture Productions after a bad day at the office. He forgot to carry out an important errand, made a costly mistake on some celluloid and, to top it all, the tea he made was cold.
9. **ROSEANNE BARR.** Sacked from her job as a salad lady at Chuckarama in Salt Lake City for refusing to enter the walk-in freezer after a painful visit to the dentist.
10. **ERIC SYKES.** Sacked from a cotton mill for singing Bing Crosby's 'In the Blue of the Night' with an empty bucket on his head.
11. **DUSTY SPRINGFIELD.** Sacked from sales job at Bentsalls for making a mess of a demonstration and fusing the store's entire lighting system.

12. **PETER FINCH.** Sacked as copyboy on the *Sun*, Sydney's leading newspaper of the 1930s, for emptying a jug of water over the editor's head.
13. **BARRY MANILOW.** Sacked from a New York brewery for failing to shut the large rolltop doors of the delivery truck. As the truck turned a corner, crates and bottles flew everywhere and the street was flowing with frothy beer.
14. **DUSTIN HOFFMAN.** Sacked from serving at the counter at Ridley's Restaurant, New York, for eating away the profits – six steaks in one sitting.
15. **RINGO STARR.** Sacked from his job as a barman on a charter boat to North Wales for being cheeky to the boss after a drunken all-night party.
16. **SIDNEY POITIER.** Sacked from his job parking cars because he couldn't drive! He got first gear mixed up with reverse and crashed into another car.
17. **ROBERT MITCHUM.** Sacked from a car factory in Toledo for refusing to wear socks.
18. **DANNY KAYE.** Sacked from an insurance job for unwittingly adding an extra nought to a payout so that the recipient received \$40,000 instead of the intended \$4,000. By the time the mistake was discovered, the man had taken the money and run.
19. **ANDRE PREVIN.** Sacked from his after-school job playing the piano for silent films in a small Hollywood theatre. For one film which kept switching rapidly between Biblical times and the 1920s, Previn started playing the Charleston and forgot to look up at the screen. When he did look up, he was playing 'Twelfth Street Rag' to the Crucifixion...
20. **ALEXEI SAYLE.** Sacked as assistant caretaker at a school in Fulham for dodging off home early. He was shopped by the school's lollipop man.

10 FAMOUS HYPOCHONDRIACS

1. ADOLF HITLER.
2. KENNETH WILLIAMS.
3. HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.
4. JOHN KEATS.
5. ARNOLD BENNETT.
6. MARCEL PROUST.
7. NICCOLO PAGANINI.
8. WILLIAM COWPER.
9. DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.
10. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Carry On star Kenneth Williams was obsessed with his bowels. He suffered dreadfully from piles and as a result harboured a deep distrust of other people's lavatories. Whenever he moved into a theatre for a play, he always had his own personal toilet, for his exclusive use. For the same reason, visitors to his London flat were never allowed to use the lavatory there – Williams insisted that they use the public toilets at nearby Tottenham Court Road tube station. Smoking was also forbidden in his flat which was described by one caller as being like a 'spotless, pristine, monk's cell.'

10 PEOPLE BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY

1. SIR ISAAC NEWTON, scientist (1642).
2. WILLIAM COLLINS, poet (1721).
3. CONRAD HILTON, hotelier (1887).
4. DAME REBECCA WEST, novelist (1892).
5. CAB CALLOWAY, jazz singer (1907).
6. ANWAR SADAT, statesman (1918).
7. LITTLE RICHARD, singer (1935).
8. KENNY EVERETT, disc jockey (1944).
9. ANNIE LENNOX, singer (1954).
10. SHANE MCGOWAN, singer (1957).

The most widely-perpetuated myth about Christmas Day births is that Humphrey Bogart was among them. In fact he was born on 23 January 1899 but Warner Bros, sensing publicity possibilities, later changed it to 25 December 1900. Among those who died on Christmas Day were W.C. Fields in 1946 and Charlie Chaplin in 1977. On leaving school in Aberdeen, the only job Annie Lennox could find was at the local Findus fish products factory. The stench was appalling. She remembers: 'I used to wrap my work clothes in a plastic bag each night and fall flat on my face when I opened it the next morning. Working on the plaice-filleting machine made me want to throw up all the time. Yet, looking back, I suppose it was beneficial in discovering exactly what I NEVER wanted to do again.' Moving south, she got a job as a waitress at Pippins restaurant in Hampstead where one of the customers was her future musical partner Dave Stewart.