

Benjamin Franklin

Franklin said that wisdom is “gleaned from the ages,” and many of his aphorisms were, in fact, gleaned from other writers and works (the *Bible*, for example.) With that caveat, I give you a partial list of aphorisms found in Poor Richard’s Almanack. (Thanks to <http://www.poorrichards.net>.)

There are no gains without pains.

At the working man’s house hunger looks in but dares not enter.

Industry pays debts while despair increases them.

Diligence is the mother of good luck.

Plough deep while sluggards sleep and you shall have corn to sell and to keep.

Work while it is called today for you know not how much you may be hindered tomorrow.

One today is worth two tomorrows.

Trouble springs from idleness and grievous toil from needless ease.

Industry gives comfort and plenty and respect.

Keep thy shop and thy shop will keep thee.

Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge.

Women and wine, game and deceit make the wealth small and the wants great.

What maintains one vice would bring up two children.

Buy what thou has no need of and ere long thou shall sell thy necessaries.

A child and a fool imagine twenty shillings and twenty years can never be spent.

To be humble to superiors is duty, to equals courtesy, to inferiors nobleness.

After crosses and losses Men grow humbler and wiser.

The proud hate pride — in others.

Blame-all and Praise-all are two blockheads.

Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that.

It is ill-manners to silence a fool and cruelty to let him go on.

The wise man draws more advantage from his enemies than the fool from his friends.

The learned fool writes his nonsense in better languages than the unlearned; but still it is nonsense.

When befriended, remember it; When you befriend, forget it.

He that lives upon hope will die fasting.

He that has a trade has an estate.

The noblest question in the world is What good may I do in it?

Sell not virtue to purchase wealth nor liberty to purchase power.

Nothing brings more pain than too much pleasure; nothing more bondage than too much liberty.

Wink at small faults; remember thou hast great ones.

Each year one vicious habit rooted out, In time might make the worst man good throughout.

Hear no ill of a friend, nor speak any of an enemy.

Many a man thinks he is buying pleasure when he is really selling himself a slave to it.

Having been poor is no shame; but being ashamed of it is.

‘Tis hard but glorious to be poor and honest.

The busy man has few idle visitors; to the boiling pot the flies come not.

If you would reap praise you must sow the seeds, Gentle words and useful deeds.
Anger is never without a reason but seldom with a good one.
Love your neighbor Yet don't pull down your hedge.
The honest man takes pains and then enjoys pleasures; The knave takes pleasures and then suffers pains.
What you would seem to be, be really.
Necessity never made a good bargain.
The heart of a fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of a wise man is in his heart.
Tricks and treachery are the practice of fools that have not wit enough to be honest.
Drink does not drown care, but waters it, and makes it grow fast.
Here comes the orator! With his flood of words and his drop of reason.
He that speaks much is much mistaken.
Proclaim not all thou knoweth, all thou owest, all thou hast, nor all thou canst.
Words may shew a man's wit but actions his meaning.
He that lies down with dogs shall rise up with fleas.
All things are easy to industry, All things are difficult to sloth.
Take this remark from Richard poor and lame, Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame.
Be slow in choosing a friend, slower in changing.
The sun never repents of the good he does, nor does he ever demand recompense.
He that would live in peace and ease Must not speak all he knows nor judge all he sees.
Think of three things: Whence you came, Where you are going, And to whom you must account.
Being ignorant is not so much a shame as being unwilling to learn.
Be civil to all, serviceable to many, familiar with few, friend to one, enemy to none.
Love your enemies, for they tell you your faults.
Be always ashamed to catch thyself idle.
Fear to do evil and you need fear nothing else.
Good sense and learning may esteem obtain, Humor and wit a laugh, if rightly taken; Fair virtue admiration may impart;
 But tis good-nature only wins the heart.
Who is strong? He that can conquer his bad habits. Who is rich? He that rejoices in his portion.
Wish not so much to live long as to live well.
For age and want save while you may; No morning sun lasts a whole day.
If you would not be forgotten As soon as you are dead and rotten, Either write things worth reading Or do things worth
 writing.
Kings have long arms, but Misfortune longer, Let none think themselves out of her reach.
Ah simple man! When a boy two precious jewels were given thee, Time and good advice, One thou has lost and the
 other thrown away.
Lend money to an enemy and you will gain him, to a friend and you will lose him.
Beware of little expenses, a small leak will sink a great ship.
There are three faithful friends — An old wife, an old dog, and ready money.
He that is of the opinion money will do everything may well be suspected of doing everything for money.
Wealth is not his that has it, but his that enjoys it.
Many have quarreled about religion that never practiced it.

Marry above thy match and you will get a master.
When there is marriage without love, there will be love without marriage.
Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards.
You can bear your own faults and why not a fault in your wife?
Fine linen, girls and gold so bright choose not to take by candle-light.
Dally not with other folk's women or money.
Visits should be short, like a winters day, Lest you are too troublesome hasten away.
Hunger never saw bad bread.
Fish and visitors stink in three days.
None preaches better than the ant, and she says nothing.
He that composes himself is wiser than he that composes books.
Who has deceived thee as often as thyself?
None but the well-bred man knows how to confess a fault or acknowledge himself in an error.
What signifies knowing the names if you know not the natures of things?
Glass, China and Reputation are easily cracked and never well mended.
The discontented man finds no easy chair.
The wolf sheds his coat once a year, his disposition never.
Vain-glory flowereth but beareth no fruit.
Silence is not always a sign of wisdom but babbling is ever a mark of folly.
How few there are who have courage enough to own their faults, or resolution enough to mend them.
An open foe may prove a curse but a pretended friend is worse.
In success be moderate.
Humility makes great men twice honourable.
Blessed is he who expects nothing for he shall never be disappointed.
Success has ruined many a man.
When the well is dry — they know the worth of water.
A countryman between two lawyers is like a fish between two cats.
Ill customs and bad advice are seldom forgotten.
No better relation than a prudent and faithful friend.
An honest man will receive neither money nor praise that is not his due.
Many Foxes grow grey, but few grow good.
Content makes poor men rich; discontent makes rich men poor.
How many observe Christ's birthday: How few his precepts!
O! 'tis easier to keep holidays than commandments.
Who is rich? He that rejoices in his portion.
There is much difference between imitating a good man and counterfeiting him.
Half wits talk much but say little.
Those who in quarrels interpose, must often wipe a bloody nose.
Quarrels never could last long, If on one side only lay the wrong.
The heart of the fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of the wise man is in his heart.
Visit your aunt, but not every day; and call at your brother's, but not every night.

Hear Reason, or she'll make you feel her.

Wish not so much to live long, as to live well.

Tart words make no friends: a spoonful of honey will catch more flies than a gallon of vinegar.

Life with fools consists in drinking; with the wise man, living's thinking.

Who is strong? He that can conquer his bad habits.

Dine with little, sup with less: Do better still; sleep supperless.

A man in a passion rides a mad horse.

The wise man draws more advantage from his enemies, than the fool from his friends.

Industry, perseverance, and frugality make fortune yield.

Seek virtue, and of that possess, To providence resign the rest.

Many would live by their wits, but break for want of stock.

Anger and folly walk cheek by jowl; Repentance treads on both their heels.

Man's tongue is soft, And bone doth lack; Yet a stroke therewith May break a man's back.

Tim was so learned that he could name a horse in nine languages. So ignorant that he bought a cow to ride on.

The same man cannot be both friend and flatterer.

He who multiplies riches multiplies cares.

The poor have little, Beggars none; The rich too much, Enough not one.

Pay what you owe and you will know what is your own.

Those who are feared are hated.

If you would keep your secret from an enemy, tell it not to a friend.

The things which hurt, instruct.

The eye of a master will do more work than his hand.

Eat few suppers and you'll need few medicines.

Mankind are very odd creatures: One half censure what they practice, The other half practice what they censure, The rest always say and do as they ought.

Eat to live, and not live to eat.

Great talkers, little doers.

Wise men learn by others' harms; Fools by their own.

He that won't be counselled, can't be helped.

If you ride a horse sit close and tight, if you ride a man sit easy and light.

Would you persuade, speak of interest, not of reason.

He that waits on fortune is never sure of a dinner.

A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over.

Do good to thy friend to hold him, to thy enemy to gain him.

Teach your child to hold his tongue, he'll learn fast enough to speak.

In rivers and bad governments the lightest things swim at top.

Would you live with ease, do what you ought, not what you please.

The horse thinks one thing, and he that saddles him another.

Friendship cannot live with ceremony, nor without civility.

The thrifty maxim of the wary Dutch, is to save all the money they can touch.

It is better to take many injuries than to give one.

An old young man will be a young old man.
An ill wound, but not an ill name, may be healed.
The sting of a reproach is the truth of it.
A good wife and health is a man's best wealth.
Virtue and happiness are mother and daughter.
A quarrelsome man has no good neighbors.
Don't throw stones at your neighbors' if your own windows are glass.
The honey is sweet, but the bee has a sting.
Time is an herb that cures all diseases.
If you do what you should not, you must hear what you would not.
Good wives and good plantations are made by good husbands.
Drunkenness, that worst of evils, makes some men fools, some beasts, some devils.
'Tis easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it.
Don't judge of men's wealth or piety by their Sunday appearances.
The Wise and Brave dares own that he was wrong.
To whom thy secret thou dost tell, to him thy freedom thou dost sell.
He that pursues two hares at once, does not catch one and lets the other go.
Don't go to the doctor with every distemper, nor to the lawyer with every quarrel, nor to the pot with every thirst.
The rotten apple spoils his companion.
I saw few die of hunger; of eating — 100,000.
Friendship increases by visiting friends, but by visiting seldom.
'Tis easier to prevent bad habits than to break them.
Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every New Year find you a better man.
Old boys have their playthings as well as young ones; the difference is only in the price.
He that would travel much should eat little.
You may give the man an office, but you cannot give him discretion.
He is a governor that governs his passions, and he is a servant that serves them.
Virtue may not always make a face handsome, but vice will certainly make it ugly.
It's common for men to give 6 pretended reasons instead of one real one.
All things are easy to Industry, All things difficult to Sloth.
An innocent Plowman is more worthy than a vicious Prince.
He that is rich need not live sparingly, and he that can live sparingly need not be rich.
Look before, or you'll find yourself behind.
By diligence and patience, the mouse bit in two the cable.
Of learned Fools I have seen ten times ten, Of unlearned wise men I have seen a hundred.
A man is never so ridiculous by those Qualities that are his own as by those that he affects to have.
Deny Self for Self's sake.
If you know how to spend less than you get, you have the Philosophers-Stone.
There's none deceived but he that trusts.
If you desire many things, many things will seem but a few.
Historians relate, not so much what is done, as what they would have believed.

Rather go to bed supperless, than run in debt for a Breakfast.

Let thy Discontents be Secrets.

Beware of him that is slow to anger: He is angry for something, and will not be pleased for nothing.

Industry need not wish.

When befriended, remember it: When you befriend, forget it.

Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure.

Learn of the skilful: He that teaches himself, hath a fool for his master.

At 20 years of age the Will reigns; at 30 the Wit; at 40 the Judgment.

He that speaks ill of the Mare, will buy her.

Speak with contempt of none, from slave to king, The meanest Bee hath, and will use, a sting.

Make haste slowly.

Keep thou from the Opportunity, and God will keep thee from the Sin.

A true Friend is the best Possession.

Fear God, and your Enemies will fear you.

Wars bring scars.

Vice knows she's ugly, so puts on her Mask.

It's the easiest Thing in the World for a Man to deceive himself.

The Tongue is ever turning to the aching Tooth.

Want of Care does us more Damage than Want of Knowledge.

Courage would fight, but Discretion won't let him.

Pride and the Gout, are seldom cur'd throughout.

What is Serving God? 'Tis doing Good to Man.

The Devil sweetens Poison with Honey.

If Jack's in love, he's no judge of Jill's Beauty.

Neither trust, nor contend, nor lay wagers, nor lend; And you'll have peace to your Lives end.

He that spills the Rum, loses that only; He that drinks it, often loses both that and himself.

Genius without Education is like Silver in the Mine.

Fond Pride of Dress is sure an empty Curse; E're Fancy you consult, consult your Purse.

Children and princes will quarrel for trifles.

Learning to the Studious; Riches to the Careful; Power to the Bold; Heaven to the Virtuous.

Speak little, do much.

Diligence overcomes difficulties, Sloth makes them.

Neglect mending a small fault, and 'twill soon be a great one.

Tomorrow, every fault is to be amended; but that tomorrow never comes.

When a friend deals with a friend Let the bargain be clear and well penn'd, That they may continue friends to the end.

He that would catch fish, must venture his bait.

Men take more pains to mask than mend.

Half the truth is often a great lie.