

## Some interesting things about Mount Everest

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**Introduction.** Mount Everest, also known in Nepal as Sagarmāthā and in China as Chomolungma, is Earth's highest mountain. Its peak is 8,848 metres above sea level. The international border between China (Tibet Autonomous Region) and Nepal runs across Everest's summit point. Its massif includes neighbouring peaks Lhotse (8,516 m), Nuptse (7,855 m) and Changtse (7,580 m).

**Materials and methods.** On May 29, 1953, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay completed the first confirmed ascent of Mount Everest, which stands 29,035 feet above sea level. Though the two mountaineers spent only about 15 minutes on the snow-covered summit, they managed to snap a few photos, share a celebratory hug and eat a bar of mint cake – an early version of today's energy bars. Tenzing, a Nepalese Sherpa, also left some of the sweets as a Buddhist offering, and Hillary, a beekeeper from New Zealand, placed a cross nearby.

**Results and discussion.** No one knew of Everest as the roof of the world until the 19th century. In 1802, the British launched what became known as the Great Trigonometrical Survey in order to map the Indian subcontinent. Heavy equipment, rugged terrain, monsoons, malaria and scorpions made the work exceedingly difficult. Nonetheless, the surveyors were able to take astonishingly accurate measurements. They soon proved that the Himalayas – and not the Andes, as previously believed – were the world's highest mountain range. By 1852, they had fingered Everest, and then called Peak XV, as the king of them all, and by 1856, they had calculated its height as 29,002 feet above sea level. A 1999 survey using state-of-the-art GPS technology found them off by only 33 feet.

Hillary and Tenzing might have been beat to the summit. George Mallory, a British schoolteacher, participated in the first three documented attempts to scale Mount Everest from 1921 to 1924. Before the last of those expeditions, he wrote, "It is almost unthinkable that I shan't get to the top; I can't see myself coming down defeated". On June 4, 1924, a teammate made it within about 900 vertical feet of the summit before turning back. Mallory and climbing partner Andrew Irvine then made their own attempt for glory. They departed the 26,800-foot Camp VI on June 8 and were last seen that afternoon trudging upwards in their tweed coats, hobnailed boots and other primitive apparel. Some people believe that Mallory and Irvine reached the summit before dying on the way down. A camera they supposedly carried could perhaps solve the mystery, but it was not among the items in Mallory's pockets when his corpse finally was discovered in 1999. Irvine's body remains unbound.

**Conclusions.** Corpses are often left behind when a climber dies en route. About 240 people have died attempting to climb Mount Everest. Avalanches, rockslides, blizzards, falls, altitude sickness, freezing temperatures, exhaustion and combinations thereof have all proven fatal, particularly in the so-called "death zone" above 26,000 feet.

### References

1. <http://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-should-know-about-mount-everest>.
2. [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount\\_Everest](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Everest).