



International Date Line

Why do we need the International Date Line?

The International Date Line was established at the same time as the adoption of a worldwide systems of time zones. The times zones were established so that in each location on Earth, the time designated as noon corresponds approximately to the time that the sun crosses over the local meridian of longitude. What this means is that if you were to travel around the world, changing the time on your clock each time you moved into a new time zone, by the time you had completely circled the globe, you would find that the time on your clock would be off by one day from the time on the clocks of the people who had remained in place at your starting point.

Establishing the International Date Line was a way to keep time standard even for those traveling. When you cross the IDL heading eastward you set your calendar back one day. When you cross the IDL heading westward, you set your calendar ahead one day.

In your own words, explain why we need the International Date Line.
