

Google celebrates Hedwig Kohn on what would have been her 132nd birthday, highlighting her amazing achievements.

Born in 1887, Hedwig Kohn had her fair share of challenges and obstacles in her life. One of the most noteworthy achievements was becoming one of only three women to obtain qualification to teach at a university in physics in Germany before World War II. However, she was forced to leave her home country during the Nazi regime due to her Jewish heritage.

As a Jewish woman, Kohn was dismissed from her teaching position in 1933, and survived by doing contract research projects in industrial physics within the lighting industry. [In 1940, she fled to the United States](#) where she pursued her dream of teaching at the Women's College of the University of North Carolina and Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She didn't stop there though. She mentored Ph.D. students in her basement laboratory to help develop her research and work in flame spectroscopy.

Kohn's journey out of Nazi held Germany was not an easy one. As the Jewish were starting to be taken to concentration camps, Kohn set her plan into action to get to the United States. However, obtaining a work visa proved almost impossible with the Nazi restrictions put on her ability to teach and reach at the university. She finally made it out in July 1940 on a visa to Sweden, then onto the U.S. to teach. Kohn was lucky though, as in less than a year later, her brother was deported and killed.

Kohn retired from teaching in 1952 and took on a research associate position at [Duke University](#), where she continued to publish work in 20 journals, a patent, and hundreds of pages of contributions to several physics textbooks that help to introduce students to radiometry – the science of measuring radiation, which includes light. And even though her textbook contributions aren't widely used anymore, Kohn is still considered a pioneer in the

field of physics.

Hedwig Kohn's main research that she started in 1912 back in Germany focused on learning about a material by burning it and measuring the intensity and spectrum of color in the light it produced.

Google pays tribute to the life and accomplishments of Hedwig Kohn with a Google Doodle done by Hamburg-based artist [Carolyn Löbbert](#).

---

Loved learning about Hedwig Kohn and her work? Then you should totally check out the following articles!

["Google Doodle Honors Johann Carl Friedrich Gauss – Learn Why!"](#)

[Google Doodle Honors Johann Carl Friedrich Gauss—Learn Why!](#)

["Katsuko Saruhashi – Made Waves in Seas and For Women in Science"](#)

[Katsuko Saruhashi – Made Waves In Seas and For Women in Science](#)

Share with friends and coworkers:

- [Click to share on LinkedIn \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Facebook \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Twitter \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on WhatsApp \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to email a link to a friend \(Opens in new window\)](#)