

For He's a Jolly Good Fellow!

G D7 G
For he's a jolly good fel-low.

D G
For he's a jolly good fellow.

G C G D7 G
For he's a jolly good fellow, that nobody can deny!

G C G G D7 G
That nobody can deny! That nobody can deny!

G C G D7 G
For he's a jolly good fellow, that nobody can deny!

(repeat)

Origins

Have you ever wondered why you hear 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow' in so many movies, and 'Happy Birthday' in so few? The reason is that, whilst 'Happy Birthday' is copyrighted, 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow' is well and truly in the public domain. Put simply, if you include 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow' in a movie or TV programme, you don't have to pay any royalties. Whereas if you use 'Happy Birthday' you do. A little surprisingly, 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow' actually originated in France. The tune comes from a song called "Marlbrough s'en va-t-en guerre", which means "Marlborough Has Left for the War". In my opinion, the story of the Gallic original is actually a lot more interesting than the Anglo-Saxon copy. The Marlborough of the title was John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, who lived between 1650 and 1722. Marlborough - who was an ancestor of the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill - successfully led the allied forces during the War of the Spanish succession. He was the most successful soldier of his day. 'Marlbrough s'en va-t-en guerre' has its origins in a false rumour of the great general's death after the Battle of Malplaquet, which took place in 1709. The song was then popularised in the late eighteenth century by Marie Antoinette, who had learned it from her nurse as a child. See this [Wikipedia article](#) for more information. It has been translated into several languages including, bizarrely, [Klingon](#). For He's a Jolly Good Fellow exists in American and British versions. In the American version the refrain includes 'Which nobody can deny', whereas in the British version, 'And so say all of us' is usually sung. Take your pick! The YouTube video on this page, by the way, is taken from the film 'Some Like it Hot', starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon. Take a look!