

# Chinese New Year!



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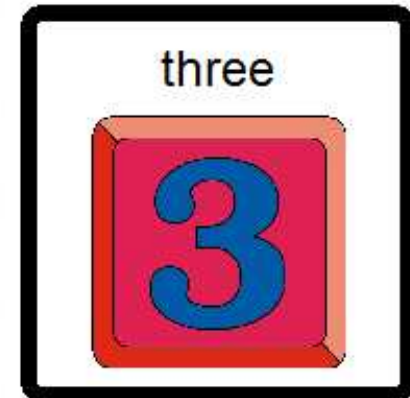
Let's celebrate the Chinese New Year! On the Chinese lunar calendar, the beginning of the year falls somewhere between late January and early February. In China, January is the start of the spring season, so New Year's celebrations include themes of springtime and rebirth.

# Ji Chou = 己丑

January 2009 己丑年正月大26日始



Sun 日	Mon 一	Tue 二	Wed 三	Thu 四	Fri 五	Sat 六
				1 12.6 十二月廿八	2 7 初七	3 8 初八
4 9 初九	5 10 初十	6 11 十一	7 12 十二	8 13 十三	9 14 十四	10 15 十五
11 16 十六	12 17 十七	13 18 十八	14 19 十九	15 20 二十	16 21 廿一	17 22 廿二
18 23 廿三	19 24 廿四	20 25 廿五	21 26 廿六	22 27 廿七	23 28 廿八	24 29 廿九
25 30 三十	26 1.1 正月初一	27 2 初二	28 3 初三	29 4 初四	30 5 初五	31 6 初六



In China, the New Year can be named in three different ways. It can be called by its formal Chinese name, the year's calendar number, or an animal.

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RAT



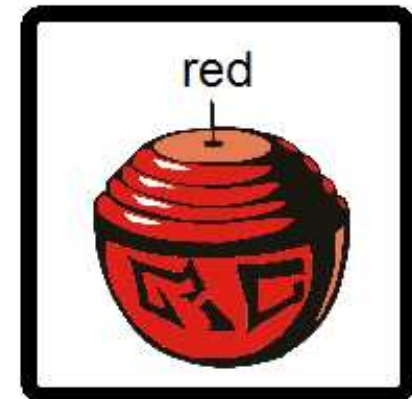
The most popular way people identify the Chinese New Year is by its animal name. Chinese communities decorate their houses and neighborhoods in ways that reflect that animal.



This is the "Chinese Zodiac." It has the twelve animals on it. The twelve animals are the rat, the ox, the tiger, the rabbit, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the ram, the monkey, the rooster, the dog, and the pig.



It's a Chinese custom to "sweep out the bad luck" at the end of every year. To get ready for the New Year, each family has a huge cleanup both inside and outside of the house.



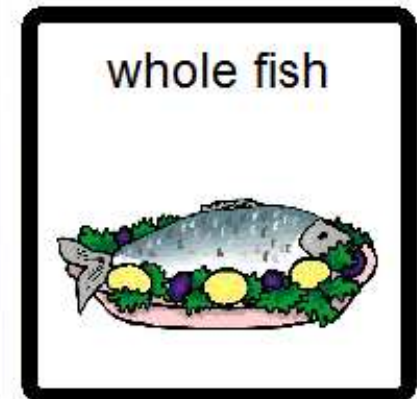
In the Chinese culture, the color red is considered good luck. It symbolizes happiness and wealth. For the New Year's celebration, decorations are painted red along with themes of happiness, health and wealth. Red banners and Chinese lanterns with New Year wishes and symbols of good fortune in gold can be seen on the doors around homes and businesses.



Many people wear beautiful red clothing when celebrating the New Year.



During the celebration, different and exciting foods are eaten. During the day, friends are served candy, walnuts and tangerines. The foods are round and sweet to remind everyone of the circle of life, and to have a sweet year.



In the evening, festive meals of pork and whole fish are served. The fish symbolizes having "plenty." To keep with this tradition, only small portions of fish are taken by each person to ensure everyone gets enough.



Lei See, or "lucky money," is given to friends, relatives and children. The Lei See are beautiful red envelopes with crisp dollar bills inserted into them. Many of these envelopes are hand painted with gold lettering wishing wealth to the people who get them.



There are parades and dances throughout Chinese cities and neighborhoods during the New Year's celebration. One exciting thing at Chinese New Year parades are the Dragon Dances! The dragons are long and can have ten to twenty people holding up the beautifully painted costumes.



Another dance is the Lion Dance. There are two Lion dancers in each costume. The lions dance through the streets to bring happiness to all the people. There are three popular types of lions. The golden lion represents spirit, the red lion represents bravery, and the green lion represents friendship. It is said to be good luck to "feed" the lions sweets if they dance up to your home or business.



During Chinese New Year parades, there are tons of firecrackers, and at night there are beautiful fireworks displays!



Chinese New Year is a fun and exciting time to celebrate.  
"Gung Hey Fat Choy." Happy Chinese New Year!

Chinese  
New Year



three



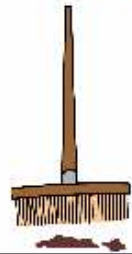
animal name



Chinese Zodiac



clean up



red



red clothes



round foods



whole fish



Lei See/  
lucky money



Dragon Dance



Lion Dance



fireworks



Gung Hey  
Fat Choy

