

Chinese New Year 2019(Dates, Traditions, Animal Signs)



Chinese New Year Quick Facts

- Chinese:** 春节 Chūn Jié /chwn-jyeh/
Also called: 'Spring Festival', Lunar New Year
2019 date: Tuesday, Feb. 5th
2020 date: Saturday, Jan. 25th
Holiday: 7 days (Feb. 4th-10th)
Celebrations: New Year decorations, New Year's Eve dinner, firecrackers and fireworks, red envelopes...

Chinese New Year or 'Spring Festival' is China's most important festival and holiday time. **Chinese New Year 2019** falls on Tuesday, February 5, 2019, beginning a **year of the Pig**. China's public holiday will be February 4–10, 2019.

When Is Chinese New Year?

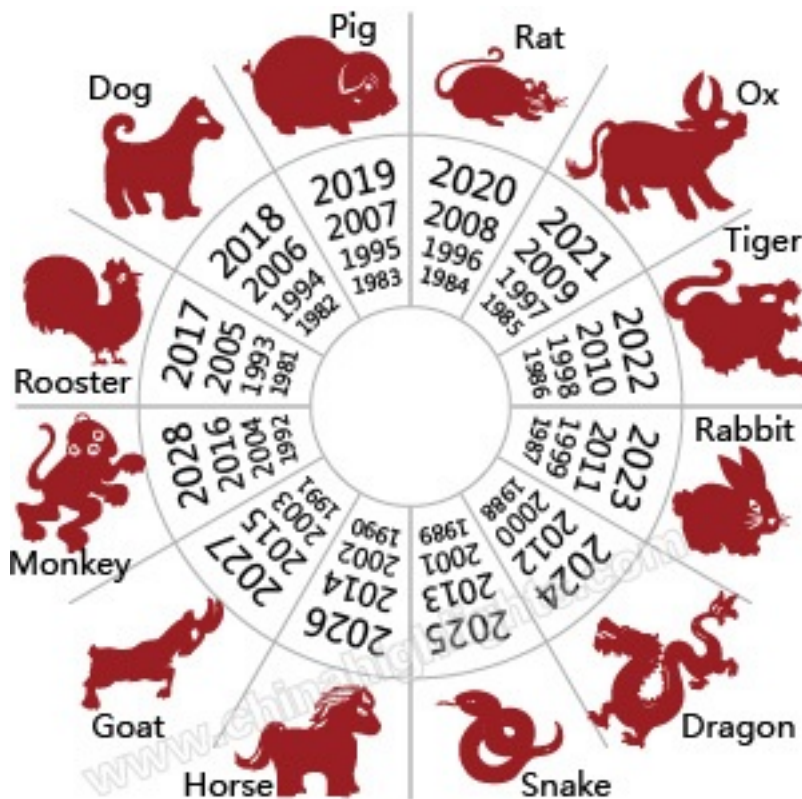
Chinese New Year has a varying date in the period January 21 to February 20. Chinese New Year falls on Tuesday, February 5 in 2019, and on Saturday, January 25 in 2020.

It's **Lunar New Year**, day 1 of China's lunar calendar, which is within a day of the second new moon before the spring equinox moon phase. It's oddly called Spring Festival, with it being in winter for most of China, but that's because it "looks forward to spring". See more on [Chinese New Year Dates](#).

The important dates during the period of Chinese New Year:

Solar Date	Lunar Date	Title
January 28th	December 23rd	Little Year
February 4th	December 30th	New Year's Eve
February 5th	January 1st	Spring Festival
February 19th	January 15th	<u>Lantern Festival</u>

Chinese New Year 2019 (a Year of the Pig)



The Chinese zodiac gives each year an animal sign.

In popular Chinese astrology Chinese New Year is important... For Chinese people, years begin at Chinese New Year, rather than January 1!

- **2019:** A year of the Pig will start on February 5th.
- **2020:** A year of the Rat will start on January 25th.

Chinese New Year Celebrations — the 4 Main Things

The main Chinese New Year activities include 1) putting up decorations, 2) eating reunion dinner with family on New Year's Eve, 3) firecrackers and fireworks, and 4) giving red envelopes and other gifts. These four things are introduced below.



Red decorations, red wrapped gifts, and red clothes are everywhere at Chinese New Year.

Public celebrations: In many Chinese cities, from New Year's Day, traditional performances can be seen: dragon dances, lion dances, and imperial performances like an emperor's wedding. A great variety of traditional Chinese products are on offer, and rarely seen Chinese snacks. City parks and temple fairs are the places to go for this.

1. Chinese New Year Decorations — Lucky Red Items

Every street, building, and house where Spring Festival is celebrated is decorated with red. **Red is the main color for the festival**, as red is believed to be an auspicious color. Red Chinese lanterns hang in streets; red couplets are pasted on doors; banks and official buildings are decorated with red New Year pictures depicting images of prosperity.



Red couplets are put up for Chinese New Year.

Most public decoration is done a month before, but home decoration is traditionally done on Chinese New Year's Eve. As 2019 will be a year of the Pig, decorations related to pigs will be commonly seen. Look out for red pig dolls for children and New Year paintings with pigs on.

2. Chinese New Year's Eve — Family Time

Chinese New Year is a time for families to be together. Wherever they are, people are expected to be home to celebrate the festival with their families. The New Year's Eve dinner is called 'reunion dinner', and is believed to be **the most important meal of the year**.



New Year dinners have many meaningful dishes.

Like people waiting in New York Time Square to see the ball dropping, Chinese people have the custom of staying up late on Chinese New Year's Eve to welcome the new year's arrival. After reunion dinner, families normally sit together to watch the Spring Festival Gala, one of the most watched TV shows in China. At the same time, most people send WeChat red envelopes or short messages to acquaintances by phone.

3. Firecrackers and Fireworks at Chinese New Year

It has long been a Chinese tradition to set off firecrackers from the first minute of their new year. Fireworks have increasingly been added to the cacophony. From public displays in major cities to millions of private celebrations in China's rural areas, setting off firecrackers and fireworks is an indispensable festivity.



Billions of fireworks go up in China at 12am Chinese New Year, the most anywhere at any time of year.

4. Chinese New Year Gifts and Red Envelopes

Like at Christmas in other countries, people exchange gifts during the Spring Festival. In rural areas and for older people the New Year gift giving tradition is still strong, but increasingly younger people prefer just to receive red envelopes (by hand or electronically).



At New Year red envelopes are customary in China.

The most common New Year gifts are red envelopes. Red envelopes have money in, and are believed to bring good luck because they are red. They are given to children and retirees. Customarily only employers give red envelopes to working adults. See more on red envelope



The Luckiest Things to Do at Chinese New Year

- Giving money/gifts in lucky numbers and lucky red packaging with lucky greetings.
- Eating lucky food like fish on New Year's Eve, especially carp or catfish with some left over for New Year's Day.
- Lighting lots of red firecrackers and fireworks to scare away evil and bring good luck.
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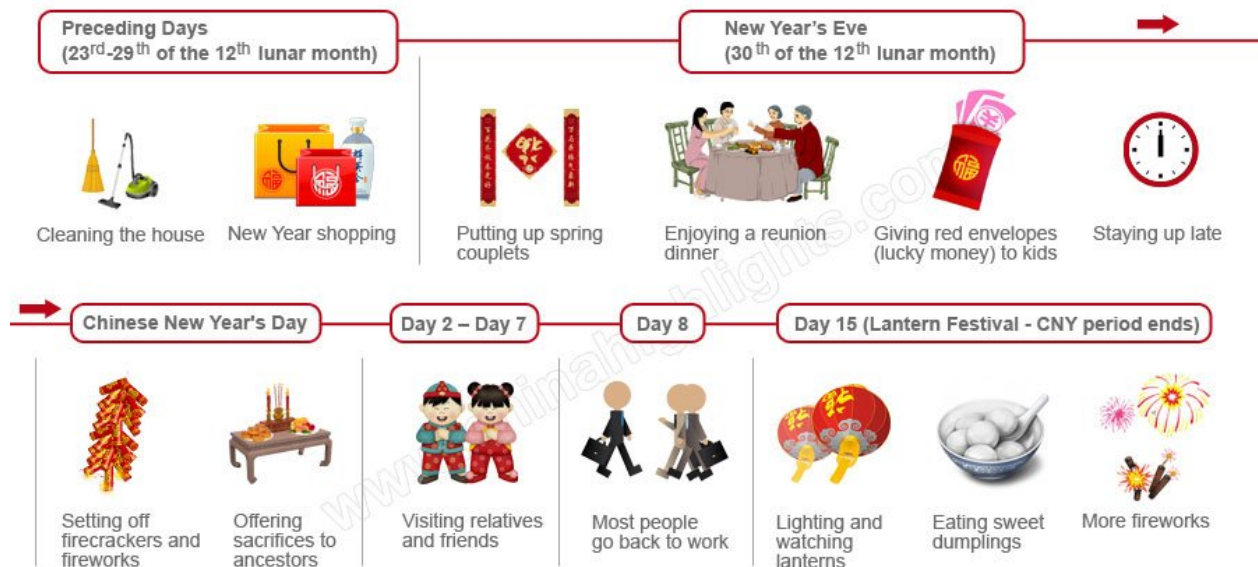
The Unlucky Things to Do at Chinese New Year

- Having an accident, especially if it means hospital visits, crying, and breakages: all bad omens.
- Giving gifts with unlucky meanings, colors, words, or numbers, or even saying something inauspicious.
- Sweeping up on New Year's Day: don't "sweep all your luck away".

See more on Chinese New Year Taboos.

Date (2019)	At Home and in the Streets	Transport	At Work / What's Open
Jan. 20 – Feb. 3	Streets decorated, cleaning, shopping, school holidays from Jan. 26.	Crazy busy: homeward journeys	End of year events; winding down
Feb. 4 (CNY's Eve)	Homes decorated, reunion dinner, firecrackers, CCTV New Year Gala	Better, but locally busy	Most shops closed by the afternoon; businesses close
Feb. 5 (CNY's Day)	12am, dawn, dusk: fireworks, firecrackers; family gifts, red envelopes; greetings	Quiet	No offices/banks open; only big malls open
Feb. 6 (CNY day 2)	Visiting nearby friends or relatives , firecrackers for guests and before dinner	Quiet	Most govt. offices shut; only big malls open.
Feb. 7 (CNY day 3)	Visiting friends and relatives in the city or friends and family in nearby villages	Locally busy, otherwise okay	Limited govt./bank services; only big malls open.
Feb. 8–9 (CNY day 4–5)	Visiting friends and relatives , or relaxing/traveling / returning to work.	Very busy: city return journeys begin	Limited govt./bank services; some shops reopen.
Feb. 10 (CNY day 6)	The public holiday period ends. China prepares to go back to work.	Very busy: more city return journeys	Some businesses reopen a day early.
Feb. 11–19 (CNY days 7–15)	Life returns to normal; schools reopen Feb. 27; decorations up till Lantern Festival (Feb. 19).	Crazy busy: return travel rush	Business as normal by CNY day 8 (Feb. 12).

Chinese New Year Celebrations



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Lucky red, round Chinese New Year lanterns with lucky Chinese characters on are very popular.

Chinese New Year Foods (Most Have Lucky Meanings)



Fish is a must for the Chinese New Year reunion dinner.

Food for the New Year emphasizes lucky symbolic meanings such as fish, which sounds like the Chinese word for 'surplus'. These foods are eaten during the 16-day festive season, and particularly for the New Year's Eve family reunion dinner.

The luckiest Chinese New Year foods (and their symbolic meanings) are:

- Fish (an increase in prosperity)
- Chinese dumplings (great wealth)
- Glutinous rice cake (a higher income or position)

Chinese New Year Greetings

One of the most famous traditional greetings for Chinese New Year is the Cantonese *kung hei fat choi*, literally 'greetings, become rich'. In Mandarin that's *gongxi facai* /gong-sshee faa-tseye/.

Chinese New Year's History

The festival has a history of over 3,000 years. Celebrations on lunar New Year's Day can be dated back to the ancient worship of heaven and earth. Over the centuries new traditions were added and celebrations became more entertainment-orientated.

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