



Chinese New Year

The Year of the Ox, Celebrations start from
Friday 12th February 2021.



Chinese New Year



Chinese New Year or 'Spring Festival' is China's most important festival and holiday time. Spring Festival is a major holiday in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan as well as in many of China's neighbouring countries such as Singapore and South Korea. It's also celebrated in the world's many Chinatowns. People return home to enjoy this celebration with their friends and family.



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This story explains why each Chinese New Year is named after an animal:

The Chinese Zodiac Story - The Zodiac Rankings Race

There are 12 Chinese zodiac signs, in the following order: **Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig**. Each sign is named after an animal, and each animal has its own unique characteristics.

The Heavenly Gate Race Story - Reasons for Zodiac Rankings

Long, long ago, there was no Chinese zodiac. The Jade Emperor wanted to **choose 12 animals to be his guards**. He sent a messenger into man's world to spread the message that the earlier one of them went through the Heavenly Gate, the better the rank they would have.

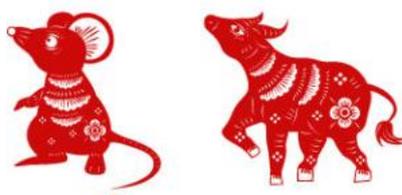
Early Risers: Quick-Witted Rat and Diligent Ox

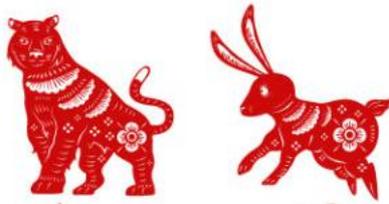
Rat ranks first.

The next day, animals set off towards the Heavenly Gate. Rat got up very early. On his way to the gate, he came to a river. He had to stop there, because the river was too fast and deep for him to cross. After waiting a long time, **Rat** noticed Ox about to cross the river. He ran over and swiftly **jumped into Ox's ear**.

The hardworking Ox did not mind at all and swam across the river with the rat in his ear. After crossing the river, he raced towards the palace of the Jade Emperor. Suddenly, **Rat jumped out of Ox's ear and dashed to the feet of the Emperor**.

Rat won first place and Ox was second.





Competitive and Fast: Tiger and Rabbit

Tiger and Rabbit came third and fourth because both are fast and competitive, but **Tiger was faster**. (Rabbit got across the river by hopping on steppingstones and a floating log.)

Good-Looking Dragon and Crafty Snake

Good-looking Dragon was fifth and was immediately noticed by the Jade Emperor, who said Dragon's son could be sixth. But Dragon's son did not come with him that day. Just then, Snake came forward and said Dragon was his adoptive father; so, Snake ranked sixth.

Kind and Modest Horse and Goat

Horse and Goat arrived. They were very kind and modest, and each let the other go first. The Jade Emperor saw **how polite they were** and ranked them seventh and eighth.

Jumping Monkey

Monkey had fallen well behind. But he jumped between trees and stones and **caught up to be ninth**. Last were Rooster, Dog, and Pig.

These 12 animals became guards of the Heavenly Gate.



WHAT THE CHINESE ZODIACS MEAN

1. Rat

People born in this year are **clever and charming**. They're curious, but are sometimes too **motivated by money**.



2. Ox

Those born under this sign are **persistent and straightforward**. They have strong faith and can be seen as **stubborn in their old ways**.



3. Tiger

Tiger people are thought to be **brave and independent**. They're respected for their deep thoughts and courageous actions, but sometimes **show off** when accomplishing something.



4. Rabbit

People born under this sign are popular because they're **sincere and avoid conflict**. Though they're sensitive, they also hesitate, which makes them **lose out on chances**.



5. Dragon

The dragon is a powerful sign. People born under this year are **energetic and excitable**. They hate hypocrisy and gossip and can sometimes be a bit **arrogant and impatient**.



6. Snake

Snakes are a symbol of **wisdom and wit**, often seen as humorous and gifted in literature and art. However, the snake can be overly suspicious, which makes them a bit **paranoid**.



7. Horse

People born under this sign are seen as **warm-hearted and easygoing**. Independence is one of their greatest strengths, but sometimes they're **overly frank with others**.



8. Goat

The goat enjoys being alone with their thoughts. They're **creative thinkers** and appreciate the arts. Though they're economic and cautious, they can also be **indecisive**.



9. Monkey

People born in the year of the monkey **love to make people laugh**. They're generally energetic and upbeat, but sometimes **lack self-control**.



10. Rooster

Rooster people are honest, observant and **hard-workers**. They seldom rely on other people in daily life which can make them **impatient** when dealing with others.



11. Dog

Those born under this sign are fiercely loyal and can **always keep a secret**. They're not afraid of the hardships in life, but they also tend to **worry too much** sometimes.



12. Pig

People with this sign are nice and **good-mannered**. They're always forgiving of other people's mistakes, which at times can translate to **naiveté and gullibility**.



Most Popular Chinese New Year Greetings for 2021



The most popular Chinese New Year greeting in southern China (Cantonese-speaking regions) is **gung hay fat choy** (恭喜发财 gung hei faat coi), which is a blessing for wealth and prosperity. In Mandarin **Happy New Year** is written as 新年快乐 / 新年快樂 and translates as “Xīnnián kuàile”, which literally means “**New Year Happiness**”. The pronunciation of Xīnnián kuàile in **Mandarin** is '**Shin-nyen kwhy-ler**' You can listen and practise here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvlUxvtKUws>

What are the Children Learning?



Experiences and Outcomes

I am becoming aware of the importance of celebrations festivals and customs RME 0-3a

I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values
RME 0-06

Skills

Understand that celebrations, including festivals and customs are important in peoples lives

D. Ridell 2021