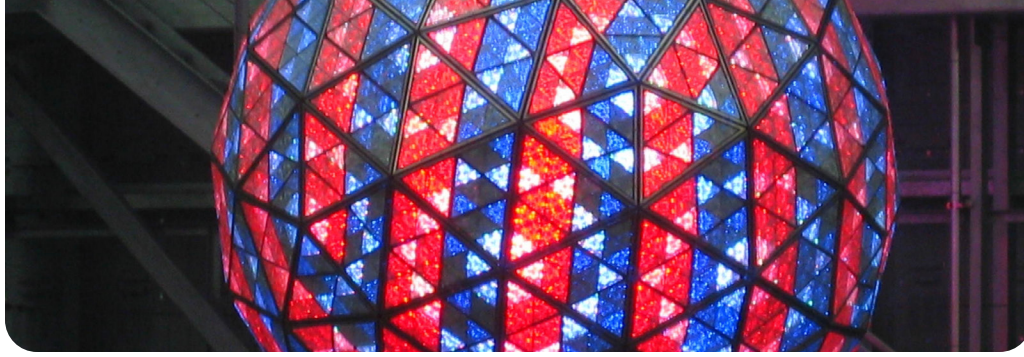




New Year Celebrations

 **beanstack originals**



New Year Celebrations

Find out different ways people celebrate the New Year around the world.



Three ... two ... one ... Happy New Year! If you're used to counting down the seconds to the New Year, you're not alone. Billions of people around the planet celebrate the change from one year to the next. New Year's is the celebration that marks the time when a new calendar year begins. There are many different ways to celebrate—and at different times, too! Read on to learn more.

New Year's in the United States

In the United States, people celebrate the new year on January 1. The length from one January 1 to the next counts as a full year. This marks the time when planet Earth has made a full journey, or orbit, around the Sun. People celebrate this new calendar year the night before, on New Year's Eve.

One of the most famous ways to celebrate New Year's Eve in the United States is to watch the ball drop. This happens in Times Square in New York City. At midnight, a giant lit ball is lowered from a flagpole. This is a sign that the old year has ended, and the new one has begun! This ball drop has been a tradition since 1908. Although many people crowd into Times Square to watch, many more watch on their TVs or online.

FUN FACT

The very first ball to drop for New Year's Eve weighed 700 pounds (317.5 kg). That's more than an adult tiger!



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Dragon and lion dance show during Lunar New Year festival.

Chinese New Year (Lunar New Year)

In China, the New Year falls during the full moon between January 21 and February 20. This date comes from the traditional Chinese calendar, which tracks time in a different way than the western calendar. Because of this, the Chinese New Year is also called the Lunar New Year. Unlike New Year's Eve, the Lunar New Year celebration lasts for 15 days! During this time, people often visit family, give each other gifts, and enjoy special foods. These traditional foods can include dumplings, sweet rice balls, noodles, and more.

According to an ancient Chinese legend, a monster named Nian would often attack people at the start of each year. To keep Nian away, people began to make loud noises. They also realized that Nian was afraid of the color red, so they would wear red clothes and hang red decorations. Over time, these activities became the traditional dances, firework shows, and clothing worn today.

DID YOU KNOW?

Chinese New Year is celebrated in many places outside of China—including across the United States.



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Traditional Yennayer feast.

Yennayer Festival

In parts of northern Africa, including in Algeria and Morocco, many people celebrate the new year on January 12. These people are the Amazigh, also known as the Berbers. The Amazigh have lived in this region for thousands of years. They follow a calendar that is based around important dates in their history. It follows the seasons of farming. Each January 12 is the start of a new year, also known as Yennayer.

During Yennayer, people celebrate with feasts. People often dine on couscous, a pasta-like dish that is formed into small balls and topped with vegetables and spices. A small piece of almond or date seed is hidden in the couscous. Then, whoever finds it receives good luck for the year!