

New Year Celebrations Around the World

New year festivals are celebrated all over the world.

They often include activities that aim to bring people good luck. Different countries and people celebrate the new year at different times. Many countries choose to celebrate the new year with huge firework displays. Fireworks were first used because people thought that the fire and loud noises could help to scare away evil spirits.

New Year in Thailand



When Is It Celebrated?

The Thai new year is celebrated on 13th April.
This is one of the hottest months in Thailand!

What Is It Called?

The Thai new year is called Songkran.

How Do People Celebrate the New Year?

Songkran is a big water festival. People celebrate the new year with street parties and even giant water fights. Some people choose to visit a temple with their family.

New Year in Japan

When Is It Celebrated?

In Japan, the new year is celebrated between 1st January and 3rd January.



What Is It Called?

The Japanese new year is called Shōgatsu.

How Do People Celebrate the New Year?

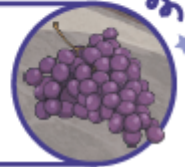
Lots of temples can be heard ringing their bells for the new year. They ring 108 times. Eight times to say goodbye to the old year and 100 times to ring in the new year.

More Traditions from Around the World



Siberia - In Siberia, a few brave people dive into a frozen lake on New Year's Eve. Some people even try to plant a tree at the bottom of the lake!

Spain - In Spain, some people choose to eat one grape each time the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. Eating all 12 grapes is supposed to bring you good luck.



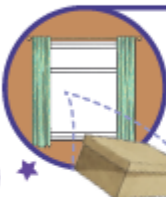
Romania - In Romania, some children dress up and dance in bear costumes. This is thought to help scare away any evil spirits.

South America - Some people carry an empty suitcase around with them on New Year's Eve. This shows that the new year will be full of adventures.



Denmark - In Denmark, some people smash plates against the doors of their friends to bring them good luck.

Scotland - In Scotland, many people celebrate Hogmanay which begins on 31st December.



South Africa - In South Africa, some people make space to prepare for the new year by throwing their old belongings out of the window.

Questions

1. What is the Thai new year called? Tick one.

- Thailand
- Songkran
- Shōgatsu
- Hogmanay

2. How many times do temple bells ring for the new year in Japan? Tick one.

- 3 times
- 30 times
- 40 times
- 108 times

3. How many grapes do some people eat at midnight in Spain? Tick one.

- one grape
- three grapes
- four grapes
- twelve grapes

4. Draw **three** lines to complete each sentence.

In Siberia... ●

In Romania... ●

In Denmark... ●

● some people smash plates against the doors of their friends.

● a few brave people dive into a frozen lake.

● some children dress up and dance in bear costumes.

5. Look at the first paragraph.

Find and copy one word which shows that the firework displays are **not small**.

6. When is the Thai new year celebrated?

7. Which new year celebration would you most like to take part in? Explain why.
