

# New Year

“New Year” is the day on which a new calendar year begins. Many cultures celebrate the event and “New Year’s Day” is often marked as a national holiday.

In the Gregorian calendar (proposed by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582), the most widely used calendar system today, **New Year** occurs on January 1<sup>st</sup>. This was also the case in the **Roman calendar** (which consisted of 10 months) and in the **Julian calendar**, which was proposed by Julius Caesar in 46 BC.

During the Middle Ages in western Europe, the authorities moved New Year's Day, depending on the region, to one of several other dates, including March 1<sup>st</sup>, March 25<sup>th</sup>, Easter Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, and December 25<sup>th</sup>. From the year 1582, New Year's Day was fixed to January 1<sup>st</sup>.

The widespread official adoption of the Gregorian calendar and January 1<sup>st</sup> as New Year’s Day is almost global now. However, other calendars also continue. Israel, China, India, and some other countries continue to celebrate New Year on different dates. Some examples follow.



New Year's Eve celebration in Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

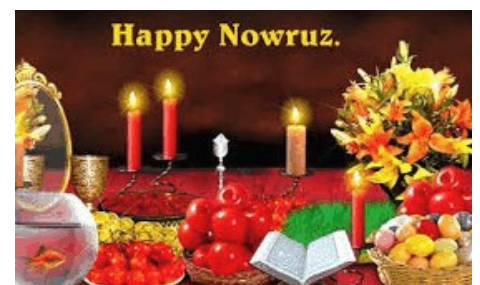
## China

The **Chinese New Year**, also known as the **Lunar New Year**, occurs every year on the new moon of the first lunar month. The exact date can be any day between January 21<sup>st</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>. Traditionally, years are marked by one of twelve animals. It is the most important Chinese celebration of the year.



## Iran

The Iranian New Year, called *Nowruz*, is the day containing the exact moment of the Northward equinox, which usually occurs on March 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>, marking the start of the spring season. The Iranian New Year of *Nowruz* is also celebrated by the Parsis in India and by Persians across the world.



## Israel

*Rosh Hashanah* (Hebrew for 'head of the year') is a Jewish holiday commemorating the culmination of the seven days of Creation. The day has elements of festivity and introspection. *Rosh Hashanah* occurs 163 days after the first day of Passover (*Pesach*). Passover is a commemoration of their liberation from slavery in ancient Egypt, and is a festival that lasts for 7 days. In terms of the Gregorian calendar, the earliest date on which *Rosh Hashanah* can occur is September 5<sup>th</sup>, as happened in 2013. The latest date that *Rosh Hashanah* can occur is October 5<sup>th</sup>, as happened in 1967. The Hebrew year AM 5778 began on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2017.



## Islam

The Islamic New Year (*Al Hijri*) occurs during the religious festival of *Muharram*. Since the Islamic calendar is based on 354 days, its New Year occurs eleven days earlier each year in relation to the Gregorian calendar. In 2008, two Islamic New Years occurred. The Islamic year 1439 began on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

For many Muslims, the New Year represents a period for self-reflection and historical awareness. Prayers and fasting occur during the ten days of *Muharram*, and the tenth day (known as *Ashura*) is when the massacre at Karbala is remembered. People gather to express grief, and Shia Muslims commonly beat their chests and cut their foreheads.



Shia Muslims bleed after hitting their foreheads with swords and beating themselves during the religious festival *Ashura* in Baghdad.

## India

There are numerous **Indian New Year's day** celebrations in different regions of India, and they occur at different times of the year. The date is determined by which calendar is followed - the lunar calendar or the solar calendar.



### Solar vs Lunar Calendar

A solar calendar is a calendar whose dates indicate the position of Earth on its revolution around the Sun. The annual cycles are based directly on the solar year. The Gregorian calendar, a widely accepted standard around the world, is an example of a solar calendar.

A lunar calendar is a calendar based upon the monthly cycles of the moon. Since each lunation is approximately 29½ days, it is common for the months of a lunar calendar to alternate between 29 and 30 days. Since the period of twelve lunations (a lunar year) is only 354 days, lunar calendars lose 11 days per year relative to the Gregorian calendar.

**Source:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Year](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Year)