CHINESE BOOST

Festivals Chinese vocabulary list

73 words with pinyin, 繁體 and meanings, 53 of them with an example sentence.
Every word here links to its entry on the site.

Parts 1 2 3 4

Festivals Chinese vocabulary list on the web
The same words as a CSV, for Anki or a spreadsheet
A free account, which keeps 简体 or 繁體, pinyin or 注音 and the rest of how you read Chinese on every device

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Elementary (HSK 1-3)

饺子 餃子

jiǎozi dumpling / pot-sticker

> 我很想吃饺子。
> Wǒ hěn xiǎng chī jiǎozi.
> I feel like having some dumplings.

过年 過年

guònián to celebrate the Chinese New Year

> 你们家过年吃什么？
> Nǐmen jiā guònián chī shénme?
> What does your family eat for Chinese New Year?

节日 節日

jiérì holiday / festival

> 三月三是壮族的节日。
> Sānyuè sān shì Zhuàngzú de jiérì.
> The Third of March is a festival of the Zhuang people.

春节 春節

chūnjié Spring Festival (Chinese New Year)

中秋节 中秋節

zhōngqiūjié the Mid-Autumn Festival on 15th of 8th lunar month

新年

xīnnián New Year

> 新年快到了。
> Xīnnián kuài dàole.
> The new year drew closer.

过节 過節

guòjié to celebrate a festival / after the celebrations (i.e. once the festival is over)

> 你们那里怎么过节？
> Nǐmen nàli zěnme guòjié?
> How do you celebrate the festival where you are?

Intermediate (HSK 4-6)

月饼 月餅

yuèbǐng mooncake (esp. for the Mid-Autumn Festival)

> 你喜欢吃甜的月饼还是咸的？
> Nǐ xǐhuan chī tián de yuèbǐng háishi xián de?
> Do you like sweet mooncakes or savory ones?

春联 春聯

chūnlián Spring Festival couplet (the first line of which is pasted on the right side of a doorway at New Year, and the second on the left side)

红包 紅包

hóngbāo money wrapped in red as a gift / bonus payment / kickback / bribe

> 老板赏了他一个红包。
> Lǎobǎn shǎngle tā yí gè hóngbāo.
> The boss gave him a red envelope as a reward.

庆祝 慶祝

qìngzhù to celebrate

> 你是怎样庆祝生日的？
> Nǐ shì zěnyàng qìngzhù shēngrì de?
> How did you celebrate your birthday?

热闹 熱鬧

rènao bustling with noise and excitement / lively

> 藏族的节日很热闹。
> Zàngzú de jiérì hěn rènao.
> The Tibetan festivals are very lively.

节假日 節假日

jiéjiàrì public holiday

> 节假日火车票不好买。
> Jiéjiàrì huǒchēpiào bù hǎo mǎi.
> Train tickets are hard to buy on public holidays.

元旦

yuándàn New Year's Day

> 元旦就在眼前。
> Yuándàn jiù zài yǎnqián.
> New Year's Day is close at hand.

传统 傳統

chuántǒng tradition / traditional

> 中华传统节日有很多。
> Zhōnghuá chuántǒng jiérì yǒu hěn duō.
> There are many traditional Chinese festivals.

除夕

chúxī lunar New Year's Eve

> 除夕那天，你要回老家吗？
> Chúxī nàtiān, nǐ yào huílǎojiā ma?
> Are you going back to your hometown on New Year's Eve?

端午节 端午節

duānwǔjié Dragon Boat Festival (5th day of the 5th lunar month)

重阳节 重陽節

chóngyángjié Double Ninth or Yang Festival / 9th day of 9th lunar month

压岁钱 壓歲錢

yāsuìqián money given to children as a gift on Chinese New Year's Eve

> 你今年收到多少压岁钱？
> Nǐ jīnnián shōudào duōshǎo yāsuìqián?
> How much New Year money did you get this year?

年夜饭 年夜飯

niányèfàn reunion dinner on Lunar New Year's Eve (Chinese New Year tradition)

> 今年的年夜饭在奶奶家吃。
> Jīnnián de niányèfàn zài nǎinai jiā chī.
> This year's reunion dinner will be at Grandma's house.

清明节 清明節

qīngmíngjié Qingming or Pure Brightness Festival or Tomb Sweeping Day, celebration for the dead (in early April)

纪念 紀念
jìniàn to commemorate / to honor the memory of / memento / keepsake / souvenir

> 周年纪念很重要。
> Zhōunián jìniàn hěn zhòngyào.
> Anniversaries are important.

腊八粥 臘八粥
làbāzhōu Laba congee, ceremonial rice porridge dish eaten on the 8th day of the 12th month in the Chinese calendar

春卷 春捲
chūnjuǎn egg roll / spring roll

元宵节 元宵節
yuánxiāojié Lantern Festival, the final event of the Spring Festival 春節|春节, on 15th of first month of the lunar calendar

> 元宵节是什么时候?
> Yuánxiāojié shì shénme shíhou?
> When is the Lantern Festival?

习俗 習俗
xísú custom / tradition / local tradition / convention

> 不同的国家有不同的习俗。
> Bùtóng de guójiā yǒu bùtóng de xísú.
> Each country has its own customs.

团圆 團圓
tuányuán to have a reunion

> 一家人终于团圆了!
> Yìjiārén zhōngyú tuányuán le!
> The family is finally reunited!

粽子
zòngzi glutinous rice and choice of filling wrapped in leaves and steamed or boiled

> 粽子刚煮好，小心烫!
> Zòngzi gāng zhǔ hǎo, xiǎoxīn tàng!
> The zongzi just finished cooking, so be careful, they're hot!

灯笼 燈籠
dēnglóng lantern

> 元宵节你想不想去看灯笼?
> Yuánxiāojié nǐ xiǎng bùxiǎng qù kàn dēnglóng?
> Do you want to go see the lanterns on the Lantern Festival?

拜年
bàinián to pay a New Year call / to wish sb a Happy New Year

> 初一我们去外婆家拜年。
> Chūyī wǒmen qù wàipójiā bàinián.
> On the first day of the New Year, we go to Grandma's house to pay a New Year call.

龙舟 龍舟
lóngzhōu dragon boat / imperial boat

汤圆 湯圓
tāngyuán boiled or deep-fried balls of glutinous rice flour, usually eaten during Lantern Festival

> 妈妈煮的汤圆又软又甜。
> Māma zhǔ de tāngyuán yòu ruǎn yòu tián.
> The glutinous rice balls Mom cooked are soft and sweet.

祝福
zhùfú blessings / to wish sb well

> 谢谢你的祝福。
> Xièxie nǐ de zhùfú.
> Thanks for your well-wishes.

花灯 花燈
huādēng colored lantern (used at Lantern Festival 元宵節|元宵节)

> 你能教我做花灯吗?
> Nǐ néng jiāo wǒ zuò huādēng ma?
> Can you teach me how to make a festival lantern?

元宵
yuánxiāo Lantern Festival / night of the 15th of the first lunar month / sticky rice dumplings

> 元宵到了，街上挂满了灯笼。
> Yuánxiāo dàole, jiēshang guà mǎnle dēnglóng.
> The Lantern Festival has arrived, and the streets are full of lanterns.

祈福
qífú to pray for blessings

守夜
shǒuyè to be on all-night duty / to be on night watch / to keep a vigil

> 你们家除夕夜守夜吗?
> Nǐmen jiā chúxīyè shǒuyè ma?
> Does your family stay up all night on New Year's Eve?

Advanced (HSK 7-9)

放鞭炮
fàngbiānpào to set off firecrackers

> 过年时，爷爷带我放鞭炮。
> Guònián shí, yéye dài wǒ fàngbiānpào.
> At New Year, Grandpa takes me to set off firecrackers.

灯谜 燈謎
dēngmí riddles written on lanterns (e.g. for the Lantern Festival at the end of Chinese New Year)

> 元宵节我们去公园猜灯谜。
> Yuánxiāojié wǒmen qù gōngyuán cāi dēngmí.
> On the Lantern Festival we're going to the park to guess lantern riddles.

农历 農曆
nónglì the traditional Chinese calendar / the lunar calendar

> 今天是农历几号?
> Jīntiān shì nónglì jǐhào?
> What day of the lunar calendar is it today?

鞭炮
biānpào firecrackers / string of small firecrackers

> 门口挂着一串鞭炮。
> Ménkǒu guàzhe yí chuàn biānpào.
> A string of firecrackers hangs by the door.

扫墓 掃墓

sǎomù to sweep a grave (and pay one's respects to the dead person)

> 你明天有空陪我去扫墓吗?
> Nǐ míngtiān yǒukòng péi wǒ qù sǎomù ma?
> Are you free tomorrow to go with me to visit the grave?

祭祖

jìzǔ to offer sacrifices to one's ancestors

赏月 賞月

shǎngyuè to admire the full moon

> 吃完月饼，咱们去楼顶赏月吧。
> Chī wán yuèbǐng, zánmen qù lóudǐng shǎngyuè ba.
> After we finish the mooncakes, let's go up to the roof to admire the moon.

七夕

qīxī double seven festival, evening of seventh of lunar seventh month / girls' festival / Chinese Valentine's day, when Cowherd and Weaving maid 牛郎織女|牛郎织女 are allowed their annual meeting

年货 年貨

niánhuò merchandise sold for Chinese New Year

> 妈妈带我去市场买年货。
> Māma dài wǒ qù shìchǎng mǎi niánhuò.
> My mom took me to the market to buy New Year goods.

庙会 廟會

miàohuì temple fair

> 你小时候去过庙会吗?
> Nǐ xiǎoshíhou qùguo miàohuì ma?
> Did you go to temple fairs when you were little?

年糕

niángāo nian gao, New Year cake, typically a sweet, steamed cake made with glutinous rice flour

春运 春運

chūnyùn passenger transportation around Chinese New Year

冬至

dōngzhì Winter Solstice, 22nd of the 24 solar terms 二十四節氣|二十四节气 22nd December-5th January

踏青

tàqīng lit. tread the green / go for a walk in the spring (when the grass has turned green) / spring hike season around Qingming festival 清明, 4th-6th April

> 周末我想带孩子去踏青。
> Zhōumò wǒ xiǎng dài háizi qù tàqīng.
> This weekend I want to take the kids on a spring outing.

烟花 煙花

yānhuā fireworks / prostitute (esp. in Yuan theater) / spring scenery / misty blossoms of spring

> 城里能燃放烟花吗?
> Chénglǐ néng ránfàng yānhuā ma?
> Can you set off fireworks in the city?

庆典 慶典

qìngdiǎn celebration

> 国庆庆典晚上八点开始。
> Guóqìng qìngdiǎn wǎnshang bā diǎn kāishǐ.
> The National Day celebration starts at eight in the evening.

正月

zhēngyuè first month of the lunar year

> 阴历正月十五是元宵节。
> Yīnlì zhēngyuè shíwǔ shì yuánxiāojié.
> The fifteenth day of the first lunar month is the Lantern Festival.

喜庆 喜慶

xǐqìng jubilation / festive

> 这身红衣服穿着真喜庆!
> Zhè shēn hóng yīfu chuānzhe zhēn xǐqìng!
> This red outfit looks so festive!

新春

xīnchūn the beginning of Spring / the 10 or 20 days following the lunar New Year's Day

> 祝您新春快乐，身体健康!
> Zhù nín xīnchūn kuàilè, shēntǐ jiànkāng!
> Wishing you a happy Spring Festival and good health!

腊月 臘月

làyuè twelfth lunar month

> 腊月里天气特别冷。
> Làyuè lǐ tiānqì tèbié lěng.
> It's especially cold in the twelfth lunar month.

年画 年畫

niánhuà New Year (Spring Festival) picture

> 奶奶在门上贴了一张年画。
> Nǎinai zài ménshàng tiēle yì zhāng niánhuà.
> Grandma put a New Year picture up on the door.

佳节 佳節

jiājié festive day / holiday

> 祝您佳节愉快。
> Zhù nín jiājié yúkuài.
> Enjoy the holiday season.

祭品

jìpǐn offering

爆竹

bàozhú firecracker

> 爷爷在院子里点了一串爆竹。
> Yéye zài yuànzi lǐ diǎn le yí chuàn bàozhú.
> Grandpa lit a string of firecrackers in the yard.

节气 節氣

jiéqi solar term

> 立春是第一个节气。
> Lìchūn shì dì yī gè jiéqi.
> The Beginning of Spring is the first solar term.

欢聚 歡聚

huānjù to get together socially / to celebrate / party / celebration

> 全家人在老家欢聚。
> Quánjiā rén zài lǎojiā huānjù.
> The whole family gets together at the old family home.

张灯结彩 張燈結彩

zhāngdēngjiécǎi to be decorated with lanterns and colored banners (idiom)

> 为什么广场上张灯结彩?
> Wèishénme guǎngchǎng shàng zhāngdēngjiécǎi?
> Why is the square decorated with lanterns and colored banners?

燃放

ránfàng to light / to set off (firecrackers etc)

> 城里能燃放烟花吗?
> Chénglǐ néng ránfàng yānhuā ma?
> Can you set off fireworks in the city?

Outside HSK

腊八节 臘八節

làbājié Laba rice porridge festival, on the 8th day of the 12th lunar month

守岁 守歲

shǒusuì to see in the New Year / to stay up all night on lunar New Year's Eve

> 你今年打算在哪儿守岁?
> Nǐ jīnnián dǎsuàn zài nǎr shǒusuì?
> Where are you planning to see in the New Year this year?

舞龙 舞龍

wǔlóng dragon dance

> 舞龙需要很多人配合，不容易。
> Wǔlóng xūyào hěn duō rén pèihé, bù róngyì.
> The dragon dance takes many people working together, so it isn't easy.

舞狮 舞獅

wǔshī lion dance (traditional Chinese dance form)

中元节 中元節

zhōngyuánjié Ghost Festival on 15th day of 7th lunar month when offerings are made to the deceased

> 中元节是农历七月十五。
> Zhōngyuánjié shì nónglì qīyuè shíwǔ.
> The Ghost Festival falls on the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month.

雄黄酒 雄黃酒

xiónghuángjiǔ realgar wine (traditionally drunk during the Dragon Boat Festival 端午節|端午节[Duan1 wu3 jie2])

年味

niánwèi Spring Festival atmosphere / festive ambience of Chinese New Year

祭灶

jìzào to offer sacrifices to the kitchen god

> 奶奶正在准备祭灶的糖。
> Nǎinai zhèngzài zhǔnbèi jìzào de táng.
> Grandma is getting the sweets ready for the Kitchen God offering.