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For other uses, see Year of the rat (disambiguation).Rat"Rat" in regular Chinese charactersChineseTranscriptionsStandard MandarinHanyu PinyinshWadeGilesshu3IPA[u]HakkaRomanizationchhYue: CantoneseYale Romanizationsjyutpingsyu2IPA[sy]Southern MinHokkien POJchhOld ChineseBaxterSagart (2014)\*laZodiac rat, showing the sh () character for rat/mouseStone monument with a carving of a mouse, at Mount Hrai-ji Buddhist Temple, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, showing the z () character designating the first of the twelve Earthly BranchesThe Rat or Mouse () is the first of the repeating 12-year cycle of animals which appear in the Chinese zodiac, constituting part of the Chinese calendar system (with similar systems in use elsewhere). The Year of the Rat in standard Chinese is Chinese : pinyin: shnín. The rat is associated with the first branch of the Earthly Branch symbol (z), which starts a repeating cycle of twelve years. The Chinese word sh () refers to various small rodents (Muroidea), such as rats and mice. The term "zodiac" ultimately derives from an Ancient Greek term referring to a "circle of little animals". There are also a yearly month of the rat and a daily hour of the rat (Chinese double hour, midnight, 11:00p.m. to 1:00a.m.). Years of the rat are cyclically differentiated by correlation to the Heavenly Stems cycle, resulting in a repeating cycle of five years of the rat (over a sixty-year period), each rat year also being associated with one of the Chinese wu xing, also known as the "five elements", or "phases": the "Five Phases" being Fire ( hu), Water ( shu), Wood ( m), Metal ( jn), and Earth ( t ).The ancient shell end bone style Chinese character sh (), for rat/mouseIn Chinese tradition, the first year was the equivalent of 2637 BCE (although others give other dates). The Prime Minister of the first emperor, Huangdi (also known as the Yellow Emperor), is said in this year to have worked out the sixty-year zodiacal cycle. Part of this achievement was the discovery and incorporation of the nineteen-year so-called Metonic cycle which correlates lunar and solar dates, as part of the system (using leap months).[1]Sexagenary cycle yearsFurther information: Sexagenary cyclePeople born within these date ranges can be said to have been born in the "Year of the Rat", while bearing the following elemental sign:[2][3] The following is a chart of the dates of the Gregorian calendar.Start dateEnd dateHeavenly branch11 February 180430 January 1805Wood Rat23 January 181616 January 1817Fire Rat14 February 18283 January 1829Earth Rat2 February 184022 January 1841Metal Rat20 February 18523 February 1853Water Rat8 February 186426 January 1865Wood Rat26 January 187612 February 1877Fire Rat12 February 188830 January 1889Earth Rat31 January 190018 February 1901Metal Rat18 February 19125 February 1913Water Rat5 February 192423 January 1925Wood Rat24 January 193610 February 1937Fire Rat10 February 194828 January 1949Earth Rat28 January 196014 February 1961Metal Rat15 February 19722 February 1973Water Rat2 February 198419 February 1985Wood Rat19 February 1996February 1997Fire Rat7 February 200825 January 2009Earth Rat25 January 202011 February 2021Metal Rat11 February 203230 January 2033Water Rat30 January 204416 February 2045Wood Rat15 February 20563 February 2057Fire Rat3 February 206822 January 2069Earth Rat22 January 20808 February 2081Metal Rat7 February 209226 January 2093Water RatFurther information: Twenty-Eight MansionsIn traditional Chinese astrology as well as traditional Chinese astronomy the sky was mapped into various asterisms or what are sometimes referred to as Chinese constellations. This is actually more similar to the zodiac of Western astrology than is the 12-animal cycle. The stars along the plane of the ecliptic were divided into groups known as the Twenty-Eight Mansions. Because the moon during its monthly cycle could be observed to appear to move from one mansion (or "camp") into the next each night in turn, they are also known as Lunar Mansions. Traditionally, these mansions were divided into four groups of seven each, and associated with one of four spiritual entities. The rat is generally associated with the celestial region of the Mystical Warrior, or Xunwu (), and specifically with the mansion X (), which in turn is associated with the direction North and the darkest part of the winter season, in the northern hemisphere.[4] (X () is more-or-less equivalent to Beta Aquarii, also known as Sadalsuud).Further information: Traditional Chinese timekeepingIn old Chinese tradition, the hours of a day-night period were divided into 12 double-hours, each corresponding to one of the twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac, with similar symbolic motif and astrological significance. The first of the twelve double hours encompasses midnight, at the middle of the double hour, corresponding with 11:00p.m. to 1:00a.m., with midnight being the midpoint of the first double-hour, which is the Hour of the Rat, or the hour z ().[5]A sign in Gardens by the Bay, Singapore, 2016In popular culture, the zodiacal idea of year of the rat is associated with various beliefs about prognostications for the upcoming year, lucky numbers, lucky colors, auspicious romantic connections, similarities between persons born in those years, correlations between Chinese astrology and Western astrology and the like. Traditional Chinese astrology and horoscope has paid much more attention to the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches than to the zoology or symbolism of the 12 animals; rather the reference to the animals was more of a way of horology, keeping track of time. Nevertheless, modern times have shown an increased interest in the zodiacal animals, with a great deal of popular interest, in various places of the world. In any case, the rat has long been associated with keen and quick intelligence.[6]Earthly Branches of Birth Year: ZiThe Five Elements:WaterCardinal Point:North (N)Yin / Yang:YangLunar Month:EleventhSeason:WinterClosest Western Zodiac:SagittariusEarthly Branch Ruling Hours:23:00 to 00:59Twelve Heavenly Generals:Sanskrit: Vikala (Hanzi: 𪛗; Lucky Flowers:Lily of each and every speciesLucky Numbers:2, 3, 6, 8; Avoid: 4, 5, 9Lucky Colors:black, gold, blue, green; Avoid: yellow, brownThe rat and the other animals as shown on a Romanian postage stampA popular modern story has it that the order of the animals in the twelve-year cycle was due to a competition between animal candidates, held by the ruler of Heaven, Earth, and Hell the Jade Emperor. According to one version of this tale, the emperor's advisors selected twelve candidates from among the animal types, including the rat and the cat. The winner was to be selected based upon merit, as to personal appearance, lifestyle, and contributions to the world. Before the competition, the cat asked the rat for a wake up call in order to get to the show on time; however, the rat apprehensive of the competition, especially as to the cat's apparent beauty, did not wake the cat, who then overslept (and, ever afterwards, the embittered cat became a ratler and a mouser). The Jade Emperor, mystified as to why only eleven candidate animals showed up, inquired of his servants. These servants hastily acquired the first possible replacement animal which they encountered, (a pig). After the start of the competition, the rat achieved first place by performing on the flute while upon the back of the ox. Impressed, the Jade Emperor placed the rat at the beginning of the twelve-year cycle (and the ox second, for being so generous as to allow the rat to play the flute upon the ox's back). Then the other animals were placed in order according to the Jade Emperor's judgment.[7]Postal stamp issued in Indonesia, commemorating the Year of the Rat/Mouse, 2008Further information: Chinese zodiac AdaptationsThe zodiacal rat is known in other cultures besides China, in Asia and beyond. Generally, the rat/mouse is the first of a twelve-year animal cycle, although some of the other animals tend to vary. In Japan, the rat is known as nezumi, and is the first in a twelve-year zodiacal cycle of animals.[8] The Year of the Rat and the years of the subsequent other zodiacal animals is celebrated during Chinese New Year, in many parts of the world, with the animal appropriate to each new year serving as an artistic motif for decorations. The Rat and other zodiacal animals are also a popular motif on Chinese lunar coins and other coin series minted by various countries and also on various internationally issued postage stamps.In English, Rat Years are sometimes referred to as Mouse Years instead, although in Chinese there is no distinction between the terms.[9]Burmese zodiacChinese astrologyChinese calendar^ Palmer, Martin, editor, et al. (1986). *T'ung Shu: The Ancient Chinese Almanac*. Boston: Shambala, ISBN0-394-74221-4, 29-30.^ "Chinese New Year". Retrieved 9 June 2017.^ "Chinese Zodiac - Rat". Retrieved 9 June 2017.^ Wu, Zhonxian and Karin Wu (2014, 2016). *Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches:TianGan DiZhi*. London and Philadelphia: Singing Dragon, ISBN978-1-84819-208-9, 25-28 and 98^ Palmer, Martin, editor, et al. (1986). *T'ung Shu: The Ancient Chinese Almanac*. Boston: Shambala, ISBN0-394-74221-4, pp. 34-35^ Palmer, Martin, editor, et al. (1986). *T'ung Shu: The Ancient Chinese Almanac*. 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ISBN978-1-84819-208-9 Media related to Rat (zodiac) at Wikimedia CommonsRetrieved from " vi 1 The word 'Mongol' was used as a tribal name until 1206, when Temjin (Chinggis Qahan) was elevated to Great Qahan. The name then became synonymous with the state until 1271, when the Great Qahan Qubilai introduced the name Yuan Dynasty. Since then, 'Mongol' has been used as a general name for the Mongol people.

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