



# Happy Lunar New Year

Chinese New year, also called Spring Festival in China, marks the beginning of the Spring season. The Chinese Lantern Festival marks the final day of these celebrations. After the Lantern Festival, Chinese New Year taboos are no longer in effect, and all New Year decorations are taken down. Some people still wait till after the festival to return to work or study.

The lanterns symbolize people letting go of the past year and welcoming the new year with good fortune.

At first, paper lanterns were used to worship Buddha in temples. Mingdi (reign 57–75 AD), the Eastern Han emperor who is credited with Buddhism's early spread in China, ordered the people of the imperial palace to light lanterns to worship Buddha on the 15th day of the first lunar month, which later became the Lantern Festival.

During the Tang Dynasty (618–907), people began to use paper lanterns more secularly to celebrate their peaceful life and the power of their country, which made lanterns more and more popular throughout China.



## 3 types of Chinese lanterns

There are three main ancient types of lanterns: the palace lantern, gauze lantern, and the shadow-picture lantern.

The palace lantern was the most-used type. Dragon-and-phoenix patterns were the main elements on palace lanterns, which represented royal status or upper class society.

Beautiful mountain or river illustrations on red lanterns expressed (wishes for) harmony and balance in nature, the elements, or families.

Riddle lanterns hanging on gates with riddles written on them were used to welcome guests, who liked to guess the answers to the riddles.



# What do the colors mean?

Red paper lanterns are symbols of wealth, fame, and prosperity. Red lanterns are used to celebrate occasions of joy and harmony, such as weddings, opening a business, family reunions, as well as the celebration of some festivals.

Yellow lanterns were mostly used in palaces in imperial times in China. Yellow was the emperors' color in ancient China, so they were not permitted for use by the general public. It is now said that yellow lanterns can bring good luck to young students in school.

In Chinese culture, white is related to death or funerals. So, white bamboo lanterns were often used at funerals in China.

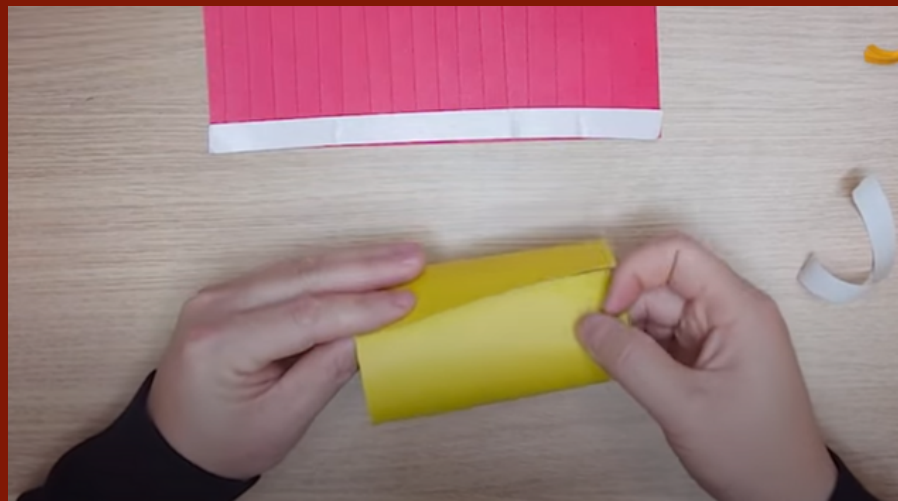
Green lanterns are often seen during temple fairs or the Lantern Festival. Green has meanings of health, prosperity, and harmony. Green lanterns are becoming more and more popular nowadays.

# Making your own Lantern

Step 1: Fold the red paper in half, then use the paper and the ruler to draw some lines perpendicular to the folded side about 20 mm (3/4") apart, leaving about 20 mm at the top. After that, use the scissors to cut along the lines.



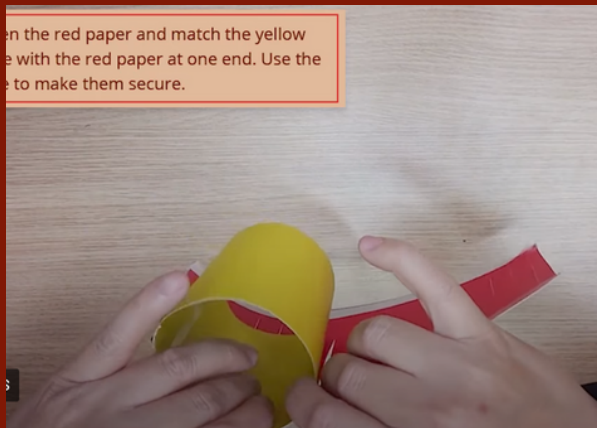
Step 2: Roll the yellow paper lengthwise to form a tube, which is the center of the lantern. Then use the glue runner and two staples to hold the tube.



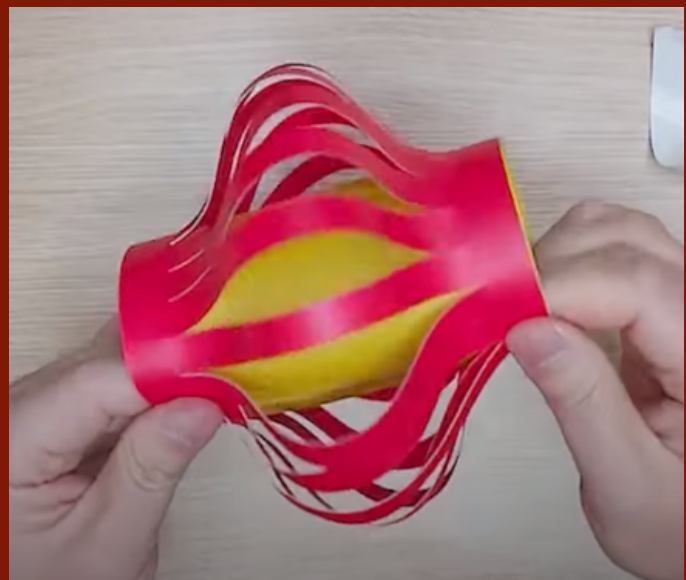


# Making your own Lantern

Step 3: Unfold the red paper and use the glue runner on the top and bottom strip you left. Then line up the sides and attach it to the yellow tube



Step 4: Now do the same with the other side, making the red paper shorter than the yellow so that the strips cut with the scissors spread out.





# Making your own Lantern

Step 5: Make handle for your lantern using either twine, ribbon or leftover paper and tape it to the inside of your lantern



Step 6: Make some tassels for your lantern with twine/ribbon and leftover paper. Cut the paper into strips and use the glue runner along the top. Then wrap around your twine or ribbon.

