

一
Is this number lucky or not?

sì
四

Chinese etiquette - numbers

一
Is this number lucky or not?

liù
六

Chinese etiquette - numbers

一
Is this number lucky or not?

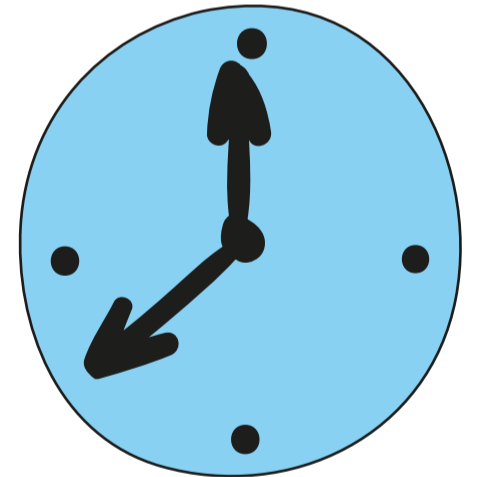
bā
八

Chinese etiquette - numbers

二
How do you present
a business card?

Chinese etiquette - business

二
Is it good to be
fashionably late
to a meeting?



Chinese etiquette - business

二
How do you
refuse an invitation?

No thanks

Chinese etiquette - business



Numbers:

The number 6 is lucky in China because the word for six sounds like the word 'to flow'.

six 六 liù

sounds like

to flow 流 liú

The number 6 is believed to bring good fortune.

Numbers:

The number 4 is unlucky in China because the word for four sounds like the word 'to die'.

four 四 sì

sounds like

to die 死 sǐ

Numbers:

The number 8 is the luckiest number in China because the word for eight sounds like the word 'to make a fortune'.

eight 八 bā

sounds like

to make a fortune 发 fā

The number represents money, success and high status.

Business:

Chinese business people expect you to be well prepared for a meeting and being on time is very important.

Meetings always begin on time and being late is considered rude.

Business:

Business cards should be printed in Chinese on one side and English on the other.

The card should be presented with two hands as a sign of respect.

It is polite to study the card for a while and then put it on the table next to you or in a business card case.

Business:

Try not to say 'No thanks' to an invitation.

Declining an invitation outright can be seen as rude. It is best to say phrases like:

Maybe

I'll see if I can

I don't have time just now but maybe some other time



三

How do you use chopsticks?



Chinese etiquette - food

三

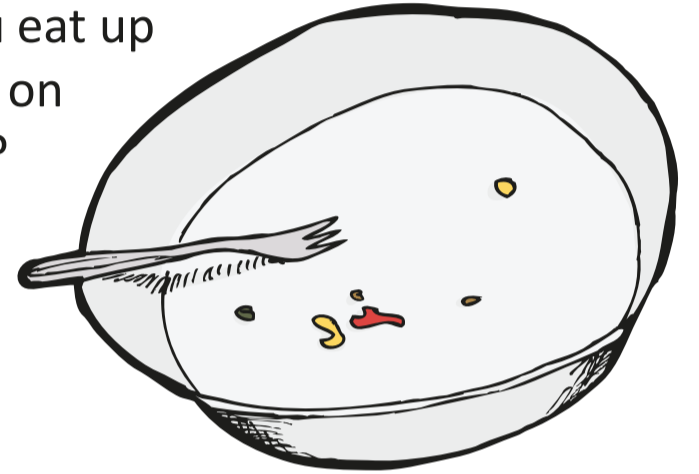
Why is drinking tea so important in China?



Chinese etiquette - food

三

Should you eat up everything on your plate?



Chinese etiquette - food

四

Should you give a tip at a restaurant?



Chinese etiquette - gestures

四

Should you point to things?



Chinese etiquette - gestures

四

Is it a good idea to use hand gestures when presenting?



Chinese etiquette - gestures

Food:

China has many tea houses where people go to drink tea, meet friends, listen to music and poetry.

Drinking tea is an important social culture in China.

The first tea houses were built during the Tang Dynasty (618-907AD). These were only for the wealthy but during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), tea houses became public places for everyone.

Food:

1. Hold the upper chopstick like a pencil, about one-third of the way from its top.
2. Place the second chopstick against your ring finger, holding it with the base of the thumb. It should be pointing the same way as the first chopstick.
3. Move the upper chopstick with your thumb, index, and middle fingers.

Food:

Do not completely clear your plate because your host may think that they did not provide you enough to eat.

Apart from insulting your host, if you clear your plate, you may also find that they will continue to add more and more to your plate to ensure you have had enough!

Gestures:

If you want to gesture to someone or call them, don't point your finger at them. This is considered rude.

Instead, the Chinese point with an open hand and not a finger.

Gestures:

It is not usual to tip in China.

It is not expected and not understood. The price of the item is as stated.

Gestures:

It is not good to talk or present with a lot of hand gestures in China. These gestures are interpreted as drawing attention to yourself and therefore considered rude and obnoxious.



五

When would you use this saying?

chī le ma

吃了吗

meaning 'Have you eaten?'

Chinese etiquette - expressions

五

When would you use this saying?

mǎ ma hū hū

马马虎虎

meaning 'horse, horse, tiger, tiger'

Chinese etiquette - expressions

五

When would you use this saying?

jiǔ niú yì máo

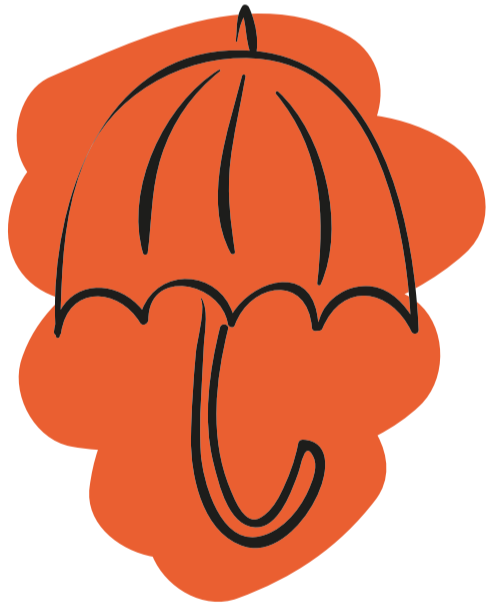
九牛一毛

meaning 'nine cows, one hair'

Chinese etiquette - expressions

六

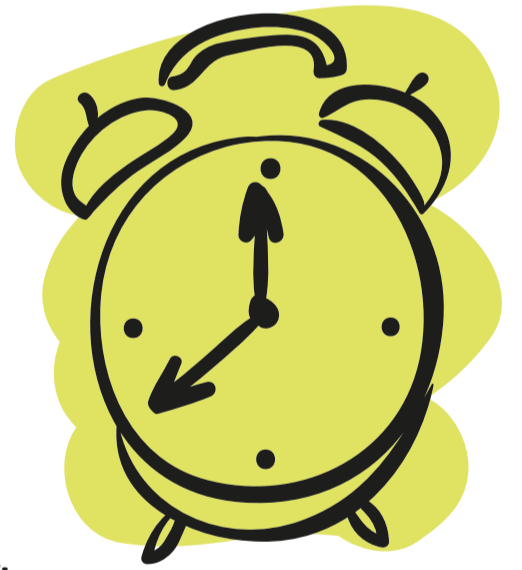
Should you give an umbrella as a gift?



Chinese etiquette - gifts

六

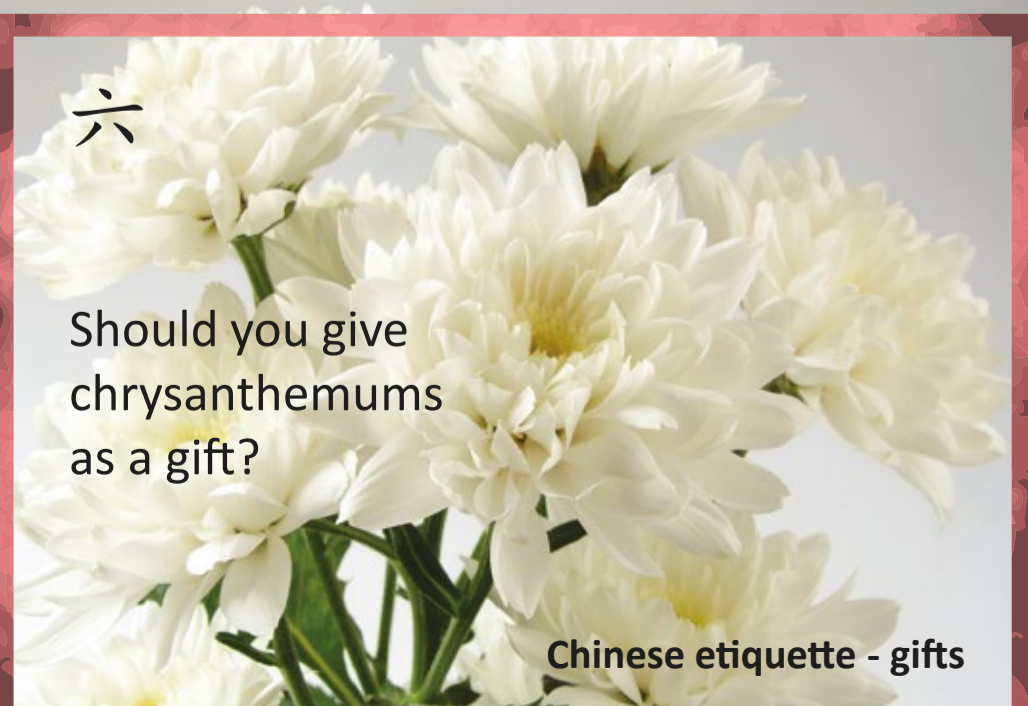
Should you give a clock as a gift?



Chinese etiquette - gifts

六

Should you give chrysanthemums as a gift?



Chinese etiquette - gifts



Expressions:

马马虎虎 mǎ ma hū hū means so-so. You can use it to answer the question 怎么样 Zěn me yàng- How are things?

It may not make sense but there are also many English expressions which don't make sense – for example, 'raining cats and dogs'.

Expressions:

吃了吗 chī le ma

This expression is a greeting on first meeting and is another way of asking how you are. It is not literally asking if you have eaten or not!

It is used more commonly in the north part of China.

Expressions:

九牛一毛 jiǔ niú yì máo

This has the same meaning as 'drop in the ocean'. A very small part of something. As one single hair amongst nine cows would be a minute part!

Gifts:

Don't give a clock as a gift. It is a symbol of bad luck because the phrase giving a clock sounds like attending a funeral.

'Giving a clock' 送钟 sòng zhōng

sounds like

'Attending a funeral ritual' 送终 sòng zhōng

Also giving a clock can symbolise running out of time which would especially insult an older person.

Gifts:

Don't give an umbrella as a gift. It is a symbol of breaking up because the word umbrella sounds like the word for 'breaking up'.

'umbrella' 伞 sǎn

sounds like

'breaking up' 散 sàn

Giving an umbrella suggests that your relationship with the person is finished.

Gifts:

Don't give chrysanthemums as a gift. They are a symbol of bad luck because they are usually brought to funerals.

Especially white chrysanthemums as they also represent death because white is an unlucky colour.

