

CHINESE NEW YEAR CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS



Chinese New Year With Lion Dance And Firecrackers

Brought To You By:

DISCOVER **SURF** **EXPLORE** **LEARN** **SHARE**

www.dsexls.com

CHINESE NEW YEAR CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

Ethnic Chinese all over the world celebrate Chinese New Year, commonly known as Lunar New Year or Spring Festival. Out of the various festivities celebrated by the Chinese, this is the longest and most important festival of all. It is a time where families and friends living in different parts of the country or the world gather to celebrate it together. It is also a time to reflect on the real meaning of ancient customs and traditions. Chinese New Year is observed as a public holiday in countries where there is a fairly large Chinese population, such as China, HongKong, Taiwan, Singapore.



Little Boy In Traditional Costume Lighting Up Firecrackers To Frighten Off 'Nian' The Beast

There are many myths as to how Chinese New Year came about. Accordingly to the most common legend in Ancient China, in the beginning of every year, a mythical beast (called Nian) would come out and devour livestock, crops and villagers, especially children. This went on for many years. One day, a villager successfully frightened the monster away by setting off firecrackers, banging loud cymbals and flying bright red coloured banners & lanterns. From then onwards, every family does these to ensure the monster never returns. The tradition carries on and Chinese New Year is still celebrated in the same manner.

Chinese New Year falls on the date marking the commencement of Spring and thus it is also called the 'Spring Festival'. The festival is signified by the phrase 'da di huey chun' which means 'earth coming back to life'. It symbolises another new season of ploughing and sowing and is celebrated with abundant food and drinks.

The significance of Chinese New Year is renewal. All the misfortunes, bad luck, sicknesses, debts and poor health of last year are removed. We then welcome a new year filled with good fortune, good luck, good health, prosperity and happiness.

Chinese New Year (CNY) dates are determined by the Lunar Calendar, which has a twelve-year cycle. A key characteristic of the Lunar Calendar is that it names each of the twelve years after an animal in the following order: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, Pig. Chinese New Year 2009 is the year of the Ox, 2010 will be the year of the Tiger, and so forth.

Animal	CNY Dates
Ox	January 26, 2009
Tiger	February 14, 2010
Rabbit	February 3, 2011
Dragon	January 23, 2012
Snake	February 10, 2013
Horse	January 31, 2014
Sheep	February 19, 2015
Monkey	February 8, 2016
Rooster	January 28, 2017
Dog	February 16, 2018
Pig	February 5, 2019
Rat	January 25 2020

(Click The Respective Animal Links Above To Know More About Your Chinese Horoscope)

Chinese New Year Dates And Ruling Astrological Animals



According to popular Chinese belief, the animal ruling the year in which a person is born tremendously influences his behaviour and personality traits. For example, people born in the Year of the Ox are generally strong, dependable, patient and loyal.

CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Days Leading To Chinese New Year

On the days leading to the arrival of Chinese New Year, Chinese families can be seen busy spring cleaning their homes. This ensures all dirt and clutter (symbolising bad luck of the old year) are washed away, and their homes are ready for the arrival of good luck. Old clothings, broken items and things associated with unpleasant memories are disposed.

Decorations of Chinese auspicious words, symbols and flowers are displayed in the house to welcome good luck. Everyone buys new clothings and footwear in preparation for the new year. Most people will have their hair cut or have a new hairdo to symbolize a new start. Homes are given a new coat of paint. All debts are to be paid off before the arrival of new year. With the arrival of Spring, Chinese New Year brings with it fresh hopes and essence of a new beginning for everyone.

Eve of Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year celebrations starts on the eve of the new year. It is also known as 'Chu Xi' in Chinese. Family members gather to have a reunion dinner. It is the most important feast for

everyone in the whole year where the Chinese go to extra lengths to serve sumptuous and auspicious food and dishes, symbolizing prosperity and good wishes.



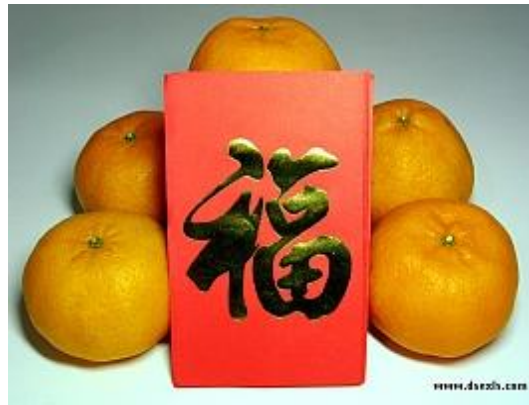
Traditional Steamboat Using Charcoal Surrounded By Auspicious Dishes

A popular method of cooking which many Chinese families enjoy doing together as part of reunion dinner is Steamboat. Basically, different types of fresh meat, seafood, vegetables, mushrooms, etc., are cooked in a hot pot filled with rich chicken or herbal bubbling soup. Traditional steamboat uses charcoal as a source of fire to heat up the broth but nowadays, modern steamboats are powered by portable gas canister or electricity.

Popular Chinese New Year Dishes

- Fresh Oyster that symbolise ‘abundance’ while its Chinese name ‘Sheng Hao’ means ‘flourishing at its best’.
- Prawns symbolise ‘happiness, laughter and vigour’.
- Abalone or ‘Bau Yu’ in Chinese means ‘guaranteed abundance’.
- Dried Oysters, pronounce as ‘Hou See’ in Cantonese, means ‘all good things in life’.
- Raw Fish salad to welcome good luck, prosperity and long life.
- Black Moss or ‘Fatt Choy’ (edible hair-like seaweed) that ‘brings wealth and prosperity for everyone in the family’.
- A complete Chicken with its head and feet intact to symbolise ‘completeness’ for a good beginning and ending of the new year.
- Fish and Meat Balls with its round shape to symbolise ‘togetherness’.
- A complete Fish, which sounds like ‘surplus’ in Chinese, with its head and tail intact, to symbolise ‘surplus and abundance of wealth and food for the entire year’.
- Chinese Lettuce or ‘Sang Choy’ in Chinese sounds like ‘growth in riches and wealth’.
- Quail Eggs symbolise ‘gold ingots’.
- Bamboo Shoot or ‘Xun’ in Chinese, which means ‘smooth sailing’.
- Sea Cucumber is also another popular dish as its Cantonese name ‘Hoi Sam’ when literally translated means ‘happiness’.
- Green Vegetables represent ‘evergreen’ which symbolise ‘everything remains perpetually fresh, interesting and well liked’.
- Lotus Roots which symbolise ‘family unity and togetherness’
- Long Noodles represent ‘longevity’.
- Dumplings or ‘Jiao Zi’ which symbolise ‘wealth’ as its shape is like Chinese Tael or Ingot.

The family Rice Urn, which symbolises 'the family's continued prosperity', is replenished. It is filled to the brim in preparation for the new year.



Mandarin Oranges Are A 'Must Have' In Chinese New Year As They Symbolise Gold

Every Chinese household is stocked up with abundance of Mandarin Oranges. Its Cantonese name 'Kum' means 'gold', and they are a must-have as they symbolise 'bringing riches and fortune to the family'.



Pomelo Symbolises Abundance

Pomelo or 'Loke Yau' in Cantonese, is also another popular fruit to have in a household as they symbolise 'abundance'.



'Nian Gao' With Red Packets To Symbolise Auspiciousness

'Niangao' is a kind of sticky Chinese delicacies. 'Nian' in Chinese sounds like 'year', and 'Gao' sounds like 'high'. As such, eating 'Niangao' symbolises 'the moving up or promotion of oneself to a higher status or level in every coming year'.

After the reunion dinner, some families visit local Taoist or Buddhist temples hours before the new year starts, to pray for happiness, good health and prosperity for the new year. Most of these temples will be crowded with devotees.



Lion Dance Is Performed As A Chinese New Year Ceremony To Invoke Good Luck And Good Fortune As Well As For Entertainment

Once the clock strike 12 midnight, firecrackers are set off to mark the start of Chinese New Year. There are street celebrations and centralized outdoor events, such as performance of lion dance and dragon dance accompanied by the exploding sound of firecrackers. The loud noise coming from the firecrackers symbolises that all unhappy and bad events of the last year are totally removed, and it makes way for a good and prosperous new year.

During Chinese New Year Period

Celebrations for Chinese New Year last up to fifteen days. Chinese families celebrate Chinese New Year by visiting relatives and friends. The junior members in the family visit the elders to offer new year greetings and well wishes. The offering of two mandarin oranges symbolise that you are bringing wealth to the family that you visit. Everyone carries a ready smile to indicate a year filled with happiness and laughter.

Abundant food and drinks are served in every family. Sweet tea brewed using red dates, preserved winter melon, persimmons and longans is served to everyone in the family. This ensures each word that everyone utters is nice and sweet to the ears.

Many Buddhists abstain from meat on the first day of Chinese New Year, as it is believed to bring them longevity.



New Shoes For Chinese New Year

Everyone wears brightly coloured new clothes and shoes to symbolically enter the year with a clean slate and to cast off the past year's bad luck. The colour red is popularly used for clothes and in most house decorations.

Throughout the celebrations, it is customary to greet each other 'Gong Xi Fa Cai' which means, 'have a prosperous new year', or 'Nian Nian You Yu' which means 'Wishing you an abundant year'.

On the second day of Chinese New Year, the Chinese pray to their ancestors as well as to all the gods. This is also the day where married daughters visit their parents to offer new year wishes. Traditionally, daughters who are married may not have the chance to visit their own parents often.

The seventh day of Chinese New Year is traditionally known as 'Renri', which literally means 'human day' and is considered to be the birthday of all ordinary and common people. It is the day when everyone becomes one year older. It is also the day in countries like Singapore and Malaysia, when the Chinese family, friends or business associates gather to toss and eat 'Yusheng', a kind of raw fish salad mixed with shredded vegetables, crushed peanuts, pomelo, spices and sauces. Everyone will toss the colourful salad together high into the air with chopsticks and auspicious words are shouted out loudly. Everyone makes their wishes for wealth, health, good luck and prosperity for the new year. This practice is believed to welcome prosperity for the coming year.



Tossing 'Yusheng' To Usher In A Prosperous and Auspicious New Year

Steps In Preparing 'Yusheng' For 'Loh Hei'

- 1) Everyone gathers around the table where the 'Yusheng' is. Greetings like 'Gong Xi Fa Cai', 'Wan Shi Ru Yi' and 'Xing Nian Kuai Lei' are exchanged. As each ingredients is added into a big plate, auspicious words are mentioned by the person preparing the 'Yusheng'.
- 2) Strips of Raw Fish is first added.
'Nian Nian You Yu'
Symbolising surplus and abundance.
- 3) Pomelo is added over the fish.
Alternatively, squeeze a lemon or lime.
'Da Ji Da Li'
Symbolising good luck and auspiciousness.
- 4) Pour the Oil (golden in colour) and circled around the ingredients.
'Cai Yuan Guang Jin'
Symbolise the strong inflow of wealth.
- 5) Shredded Carrots are added.
'Hong Yun Dang Tou'
Indicating the arrival of good luck.
- 6) Shredded Green Radish is added.
'Qing Chun Chang Zhu'
Symbolising eternal youth.
- 7) Shredded White Radish is added.
'Bu Bu Gao Sheng'
Symbolising promotion at work or increase in business profits.
- 8) Crushed Peanuts are added on the dish.
'Jin Yin Man Di'
Symbolising the overflowing of gold and silver.
- 9) Sesame Seeds are added.
'Sheng Yi Xing Long'
Symbolising a flourishing and prosperous business.
- 10) Pepper (in red sachet) and Five-Spice Powder (in green sachet) are sprinkled over the ingredients.
'Shuang Xi Ling Men'
Symbolising the showers of blessings for double happiness.
- 11) Plum Sauce is added on top of all the ingredients.
'Tian Tian Mi Mi'
Symbolising that life will be sweet.
- 12) Deep-Fried Golden Crisps are added.
'Pian Di Huang Jin'
The ground is completely filled with gold.
- 13) Finally everyone tosses the 'Yusheng' salad high in the air with chopsticks shouting out 'Loh Hei' (in Cantonese) loudly, followed by 'Yue Lao Yue Qi, Lao Dao Feng Shen Shui Qi'. 'Loh Hei' means 'tossing for good luck'. 'Yue Lao Yue Qi, Lao Dao Feng Shen Shui Qi' means 'the higher you toss it, the better your luck, till good luck becomes so overwhelming'. Other auspicious words and wishes are also shouted.



'Tang Yuan' Rounded Shape Symbolise Completeness Or Perfection

The fifteenth day of the new year is known as 'Yuan Xiao Jie'. Chinese families cook glutinous rice ball known as 'Tang Yuan' in Chinese. 'Tang Yuan' is round in shape and resembles the shape of the full moon. It symbolises 'togetherness, completeness or perfection'. These are rounded sweet glutinous rice balls cook in soup with rock sugar. Everyone in the family will gather to eat the 'Tang Yuan' on this day. 'Yuan Xiao Jie' is also celebrated as the Lantern Festival. You will be able to see children carrying lighted lanterns on the playgrounds and along the streets. This day also marks the end of the Chinese New Year celebrations.

CHINESE NEW YEAR TRADITIONAL BELIEFS

There are many superstitions and taboos associated with Chinese New Year :

- Children stay up late on the eve of Chinese New Year after the reunion dinner. The longer they stay up, the longer will their parents live.
- Bathing with pomela leaves and flowers on the eve of Chinese New Year gets rid of bad luck and ensures good health for the rest of the year.
- Doors and windows are kept open to allow the bad luck of old year to get out and to welcome the new year's good luck. In the night, all lights in the house are switched on to frighten away spirits.
- All brooms are kept and no sweeping is allowed. This is to avoid sweeping good luck and wealth out of the house.
- Sweets are eaten to ensure everyone has a sweet and easy year ahead.
- Everyone wears only red or bright coloured clothes. It is believed that black or white clothes will bring bad luck for the new year.
- Refrain from saying anything bad or unlucky. Do not quarrel or use foul language. Talking about sickness and death are also considered inauspicious.
- Parents refrain from scolding and punishing their children and their misbehaviour are tolerated on new year's day. It is believed that if they cry on the first day of new year, they will cry throughout the entire year.
- Avoid breaking anything, like bowls, cups, vases, etc., during Chinese New Year. Breaking any of the above is considered unlucky and is said to result in the break-up of fortune or family unity. However, if something is broken accidentally, one must quickly say 'sui sui ping an', which literally means 'year after year will be safe and peaceful' at the scene. Some

people even add the the following phrase 'lo di kai hua' to mean 'landing on the ground and flowers blooming' to signify auspiciousness. Avoid serving food in chipped crockery as well.

- Avoid cutting hair during the entire period of Chinese New Year.

Whatever happens on the first day of Chinese New Year reflects what will happen in the rest of the year.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHINESE NEW YEAR RED PACKETS



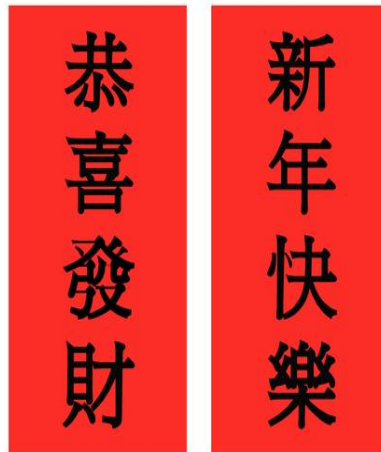
Red Packet Brings Good Luck To Both The Giver And The Receiver

Adults give children and unmarried relatives red packet with lucky money inside to signify good fortune. The amount of cash inside the red packet is normally an even number, because odd number is considered unlucky. The act of giving red packets brings good luck to the person who receives it, and also to the one who gives it out. What this means is that when you give more red packets, more good luck comes to you.

There is also an ancient belief that red packets are given to symbolize long life for the person who gives it. The lucky money inside the red packet is called 'Ya Sui Qian' in Chinese, which means 'suppressing the age money'. As everyone grows a year older during Chinese New Year, the elder folks 'borrow' the young energy of children by giving them red packets in return. The effect of such practice is believed to be stronger when one gives more red packets to children.

CHINESE NEW YEAR DECORATIONS AND FLOWERS

Decorations



Chinese Couplets 'Gong Xi Fa Cai' And 'Xing Nian Kuai Lei'

Spring Couplets / Banners

This ancient Chinese New Year symbol holds traditional significance. It is traditionally written with black ink on red paper and hung in front of one's house or shop before the arrival of Chinese New Year. It expresses 'best wishes, aspirations and good fortune for the coming year'.



Tangerine Symbolises Good Tidings And Is A Very Popular Fruit During Chinese New Year

Tangerines and Oranges

Tangerines and oranges are commonly displayed in homes and shops. Tangerines symbolises 'good tidings' as it sounds like 'good luck' in Chinese. Oranges symbolises wealth as it sounds like 'gold' in Cantonese.



'Tray Of Togetherness' Contains 8 Auspicious Food Items To Represent Good Fortune

Tray of Togetherness

Every family keeps a tray full of auspicious food items to welcome guests and relatives. This tray is called a 'Tray of Togetherness' or 'Chun He' in Chinese. This Chinese New Year symbol is traditionally made up of eight compartments. The number 'eight' symbolises good fortune. For this reason, it is also sometimes called as 'Ba Bao He' or 'Eight Treasures Box'. Each compartment is completely filled with an auspicious food item of significance to the Chinese New Year season. There are more than 8 items to pick and choose from, and it just depends on the family members preferences. Each item represents some kind of good fortune.

- Sweeten Candied Winter Melons – 'Tian Tian Mi Mi' signify 'a sweet and easy life'
- Sweeten Lotus Root – 'Jia Ou Tian Chen' signify 'marital bliss' or 'match made in heaven'
- Sweeten Tangerine – 'Ji Xiang Ru Yi' signify 'auspiciousness'
- Sweeten Shredded Coconut Pieces – 'Yong Jie Tong Xin' signify 'everlasting love'
- Sweeten Ginger – 'Wan So Wu Jiang' signify 'longevity'
- Sweeten Carrots – 'Jin Ying Cai Bao' signify 'wealth and precious jewels'
- Sweeten Lotus Seeds – 'Lian Shen Gui Zi' signify 'fertility'
- Sweeten Dried Red Dates – 'Hong Yun Dang Tou' signify 'good luck in every endeavour'
- Sweeten Water Chestnut – 'Dong Chen Xi Jiu' signify 'accomplishment in all activities'
- Sweeten Pineapple – 'Fei Huang Teng Da' signify 'great achievement in career or business'
- Sweet Potato – 'Huang Jing Man Tong' signify 'overflowing pot of gold'
- Sweeten Mandarin Orange – 'Da Ji Da Li' signify 'auspiciousness'
- Sweeten Dried Longans – signify 'many good sons'
- Red Melon Seeds – red colour signify 'joy and happiness'
- Pistachio Nuts – 'Kai Xin Guo' in Chinese which means 'happiness'

[Click Here To See The Individual Photo Of Each Food Item.](#)

In modern times, sweets such as 'Rabbit' candy, chocolate coins or ingots are used to represent a sweet and joyful new year and the abundance of wealth.

Plants And Flowers

Plants and Flowers play a significant role in the Chinese New Year decorations as they symbolise hopes of good luck, prosperity & happiness either by the literal or phonetic meaning of the names of the plants or by the colour of the flowers. A home is considered lucky if a plant blooms on New Year's Day as it signifies a year of prosperity. Below are some of the plants and flowers most commonly associated with Chinese New Year.



Peach Blossom Symbolises Courage And Hope

Peach Blossom

Peach blossom symbolises 'courage and hope'. The blossoms burst forth at the end of winter season on a seemingly lifeless branch.



Water Narcissus Signifies Good Luck And Prosperity

Water Narcissus

Water Narcissus signifies 'good luck and prosperity'. If the narcissus flowers blossom on the first day of the New Year, it indicates good fortune for the rest of the year.



Lucky Bamboo Symbolises Good Fortune

Lucky Bamboo

It is known as 'Kai Yun Zhu' in Chinese, which means 'bamboo that invites good fortune'. Lucky Bamboo represents the natural 5 elements of water, earth, wood, metal and fire to balance the flow of energy or 'chi' in the house. A red ribbon is tied around the stalks to represent the fire element. The number of bamboo stalks and layers has its own symbolic meaning:

2 for Love & Marriage

3 for Happiness

5 for Perfection

6 for Luck

8 for Wealth and Abundance

9 for Everlasting Good Fortune and Happiness



Four Season Lime Symbolises Gold

Four Season Lime

'Four Season Lime' is known as 'Si Ji Ju' in Chinese. This is a very popular plant during Chinese New Year as 'Ju' is associated with New Year. It bears many fruits, which is called 'Kum' in Cantonese and 'Kum' literally means 'gold'. Therefore, having a 'Four Season Lime' plant at home symbolises the 'abundance of wealth'.



'Jing Qian Shu' Symbolises Wealth

(Can you spot the flower above? It looks like a white corn.)

[Click Here To See A Close-Up Photo Of The 'Jing Qian Shu's' Flower.](#)

Jing Qian Shu

'Jing Qian Shu' is another popular plant as its Chinese name literally means 'Golden Money Plant'. Its shiny angular shaped leaves represent gold ingots. Therefore, having this plant at home symbolises 'having plenty of wealth in the household'. When it flowers, it is believed that good fortune is arriving for the household. Can you spot the flower above? It looks like a white corn.



Chrysanthemum Signifies Great Joy And Happiness

Chrysanthemum

Chrysanthemum is well liked for its vibrant and rich colour, especially its yellow flowers. Chrysanthemum signifies 'great joy and happiness'.



Peony Flowers Represent The Arrival Of Good Fortune

Peony

Peony is also known as 'Mu Dan' or 'Fu Gui Hua'. It represents 'wealth, prosperity and honour'. When it flowers, it represents 'good fortune is arriving'.



'Ong Lai Huay' Signifies The Arrival Of Wealth And Prosperity

Guzmania

Guzmania is also known as 'Huang Li Hua' in Chinese. It is popular because its Hokkien name 'Ong Lai Huay' signifies the 'arrival of wealth and prosperity'. It is also popularly referred as 'Pineapple Flower'.



Lotus Flower Symbolises Purity, Elegance And Peacefulness

Lotus Flower

Lotus Flower is greatly esteemed and cherished by Buddhist followers. Lotus represents 'purity of body, speech and mind', as it floats above the muddy waters of attachment and desire without being stained. It symbolises 'purity, elegance and peacefulness'.



'Fatt Chye Su' Symbolises Wealth And Prosperity

Fatt Chye Su

'Fatt Chye Su' is another sought after plant during Chinese New Year. As the Chinese name suggest, this plant brings 'wealth and prosperity'. When it flowers, it is believed that the owner will experience 'good windfall luck'.



'Keng Huay' Flowers Signify The Arrival Good Luck

[Click Here To See A Close-Up Photo Of The 'Keng Huay's' Flower.](#)

Keng Huay

'Keng Huay' is a Hokkien name. Its botanical name is known as Epiphyllum. It is considered as a lucky plant by the Chinese. When it flowers, it signifies 'the arrival of good luck'.

Chinese New Year Pictures



Food Items For 'Tray Of Togetherness'



Many Varieties Of Sweets And Candies



Chinese Sausages



Salted Ducks



Dried Persimmons



'Nian Gao' With Auspicious Chinese Word 'Fa'



Chinese New Year Decorations



Chinese New Year Decorations



Various Types Of Melon Seeds And Groundnuts



Chinese New Year Cookies And Pastries



'Hu Lu'



Pumpkins



Shop Selling 'Bak Kwa' or Barbecued Meat



Chinese New Year Shopping



Shopping For Chinese New Year Decorations



Shop Selling Various Types Of Melon Seeds

Wishing All Readers A Happy & Prosperous Chinese New Year

Disclaimer

The Content is provided without warranty of any kind. The author and publisher of www.dsexls.com do not make any warranty whatsoever as to the accuracy or completeness of the Content or the results to be obtained from using the Content. We will not be responsible for any claims attributable to errors, omissions, or other inaccuracies in the information contained therein. You, the user, assume the entire risk for the results and performance of the Content. Further, neither we nor any associated parties make any representations or warranties, either express or implied, with respect to the Content, including, but not limited to, the quality, performance or fitness for a particular purpose of the Content or any information contained therein. In no event will any associated parties or we be liable for direct, indirect, special, incidental, or consequential damages arising out of the use of or inability to use the Content or for any loss or damage of any nature caused to any person as a result of that use.

The use of our information is based on your own due diligence and you agree that the author and publisher of www.dsexls.com are not liable for any success or failure of your part that is directly or indirectly related to the use of our information.

Giveaway License

You may giveaway or distribute this product for free. However, you MAY NOT change any part of the contents whatsoever.

© Copyright DSEXLS

Unauthorized duplication of this material in any form is strictly prohibited.

Feel free to send us your comments to dsexls@gmail.com.

Please include your name and email address.

(We reserve the right to publish your comments on our website).

Other Useful Resources

- [Internet Marketing](#)
- [Online Marketing](#)
- [Dog Lovers](#)
- [Healthy Lifestyle](#)
- [Home and Family](#)
- [Digital Shopping For eBook and Software](#)