

# Lunar New Year Activities (Ages 0–5)

## Infants (0–12 months)

### 1) Red & Gold Sensory Board

**Skills:** sensory exploration, language, attention

**Materials:** sturdy cardboard/foam board, red/yellow paper or fabric scraps, wide clear packing tape (or contact paper)

#### Setup

1. Attach red/yellow paper and fabric pieces to the board (different textures: smooth, bumpy, soft).
2. Cover edges with tape so nothing peels up.

#### Directions

1. Sit the baby on your lap or on a mat with the board in front.
2. Guide the baby's hand to touch one area at a time.
3. Narrate simply: “**Red.** Soft.” “**Gold.** Smooth.”
4. Pause for the baby to explore; repeat 2–3 words only.

**Tip:** Keep it short (1–3 minutes). Rotate textures weekly to keep interest.

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### 2) “Lantern Lights” Calm Moment

**Skills:** calming routine, caregiver connection

**Materials:** LED tea light or small flashlight (never a real flame), simple paper lantern decoration (optional)

#### Directions



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1. Dim lights slightly (or simply sit in a quiet corner).
2. Turn on the LED light and hold it near a red/yellow paper “lantern.”
3. Softly say: “We’re taking a calm breath... in... out.” (The baby doesn’t have to copy.)
4. Hum or sing a quiet song for 30–60 seconds.

**Tip:** This works well before a nap or after busy play.

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### **3) Mirror “New Year Hello”**

**Skills:** social connection, early language

**Materials:** mirror (unbreakable classroom mirror is best)

#### **Directions**

1. Hold the baby facing the mirror.
2. Point gently: “Hello!” “That’s you!”
3. Add simple phrases: “New day.” “New year.” “You are loved.”
4. Smile, pause, and copy baby sounds.

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### **4) Peek-a-Boo Scarf**

**Skills:** object permanence, attention

**Materials:** red scarf (lightweight, breathable)

#### **Directions**

1. Hold a scarf in front of your face: “Where did I go?”
2. Pull it down: “Peek-a-boo!”



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3. Repeat and invite the baby to touch the scarf.

**Safety:** Keep scarf away from baby's face; adult holds it.

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## Young Toddlers (12–24 months)

### 1) “Follow the Dragon” Movement Line

**Skills:** gross motor, following directions

**Materials:** red scarf or ribbon streamer

**Setup:** Clear a simple pathway.

#### Directions

1. Hold scarf and say: “I’m the dragon. Follow me!”
2. Do 3 simple moves: **walk, tiptoe, stop.**
3. Say each move as you do it: “Dragon walks... Dragon tiptoes... Dragon STOP!”
4. Celebrate: “You stopped! Nice listening.”

**Tip:** Keep it 2–3 minutes. Repeat later the same day.

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### 2) Red & Gold Color Hunt

**Skills:** color recognition, sorting, cleanup routine

**Materials:** large red/yellow paper shapes, 2 baskets

#### Setup

1. Place shapes in visible spots (on shelves, floor corners).
2. Put baskets in the center.



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## Directions

1. Say: "Let's find **red**!"
2. Point and guide: "Pick up red and put it in the red basket."
3. Repeat with yellow/gold.
4. End with counting: "We found 1...2...3!"

**Tip:** If colors are hard, do "find hearts/circles" instead.

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## 3) Dot Art "Good Wishes"

**Skills:** fine motor, cause/effect

**Materials:** dot markers or sponge stamps, red paint, paper

## Directions

1. Put 1 paper per child on a table.
2. Model: "Dot, dot, dot."
3. Toddlers stamp dots anywhere they like.
4. Use a simple phrase: "We're making **good wishes** art."

**Tip:** Offer just one color for less overwhelm.

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## 4) Drum & Freeze

**Skills:** listening, impulse control

**Materials:** drum, shaker, or tapping on a table

## Directions



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1. Explain with actions: “When you hear the drum—move. When it stops—freeze.”
2. Tap for 5 seconds → stop.
3. Say: “Freeze!” Show the freeze.
4. Repeat 3–5 rounds.

**Tip:** Use this right before cleanup to transition calmly.

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## Older Toddlers (2–3 years)

### 1) Paper Lantern Craft

**Skills:** fine motor, creativity

**Materials:** construction paper, crayons, adult scissors, tape/glue, stapler (adult use), paper handle strip

#### Setup (Adult)

1. Pre-cut one rectangle per child.
2. Fold in half lengthwise and pre-cut 4–6 slits (not all the way to edges).

#### Directions

1. Children color and decorate the paper first (stickers optional).
2. Adult helps roll into a tube and staple/tape the ends.
3. Add a paper handle.
4. “Lantern walk”: children hold lanterns and parade quietly once around the room.

**Tip:** Skip candles entirely—just the craft and parade.



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## 2) Red Envelope Pretend Play

**Skills:** turn-taking, social-emotional, pretend play

**Materials:** red paper envelopes (or folded paper), picture cards, stickers, “kindness coupons”

### Setup

1. Put 3–5 cards per envelope (smiley faces, “high five,” “help clean up,” “you choose the song”).

### Directions

1. Show an envelope: “Some families share red envelopes as a tradition.”
2. Explain: “Ours are for **kind messages**.”
3. Children pick one envelope and open it with help.
4. They give a card to a friend: “This is for you!”
5. Practice: “Thank you!”

**Tip:** Keep it optional—some kids may prefer to keep their card.

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## 3) Festival Sensory Bin

**Skills:** fine motor, early math, vocabulary

**Materials:** pom-poms (large), red/yellow loose parts, cups, scoops, tongs, muffin tin

### Directions

1. Model: “Scoop... pour... dump.”
2. Offer a goal: “Can you fill 1 cup?” “Can you make red, yellow, red?”



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3. Add language: “full/empty,” “more/less,” “my turn/your turn.”

**Safety:** Avoid small parts if children still mouth objects.

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## 4) Family Feast Dramatic Play

**Skills:** pretend play, manners, language

**Materials:** play dishes, chopsticks as props (optional for older toddlers), pretend food

### Directions

1. Set a simple “family table” area.
2. Model phrases:
  - “Would you like some?”
  - “Yes, please.”
  - “No, thank you.”
3. Rotate roles: cook, server, guest.
4. Add clean-up: “Let’s reset the table for the next family.”

**Tip:** Keep language neutral: “Some families share special meals.”

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## Preschool (3–5 years)

### 1) New Year Wishes Chain

**Skills:** reflection, writing/dictation

**Materials:** paper strips, markers, stapler/tape

### Directions



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1. Ask: "What is a **good wish** for our classroom?"  
Examples: "Kindness," "Friends," "Helping," "Being brave."
2. Children write (or dictate) one wish per strip.
3. Link strips into a chain and hang it up.
4. Read the chain aloud: "We wish for kindness... for helping..."

**Tip:** Offer sentence starters:

- "I wish for \_\_\_\_."
- "Our class can \_\_\_\_."

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## 2) Dragon Dance

**Skills:** coordination, teamwork

**Materials:** paper strips taped to a hoop/cardboard tube, scarves, simple instruments

### Directions

1. Explain: "Some families enjoy dragon dances during Lunar New Year celebrations."
2. Choose 2–4 children to hold the "dragon" (switch turns).
3. Play a short song. Children move in a line (slow/fast/stop).
4. Add direction words: "Over/under," "around the circle."
5. End with a bow: "Great teamwork!"

**Tip:** Keep it short (2–4 minutes) and rotate roles quickly.

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## 3) Red/Gold Pattern & Count (Math Center)



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**Skills:** patterns, counting, comparison

**Materials:** red/yellow shapes, glue sticks, paper

#### Directions

1. Model one pattern: red-yellow-red-yellow.
2. Children create their own strip pattern and glue it down.
3. Count together: "How many reds? How many yellows?"
4. Extension: "Which has more? Are they equal?"

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#### 4) "Fresh Start" Cleaning Helpers

**Skills:** responsibility, executive function

**Materials:** picture checklist (simple icons), wipes, small brooms (safe)

#### Directions

1. Say: "Some families clean and prepare to welcome the new year. We can do a 'fresh start' too."
2. Assign small jobs: books, blocks, art shelf, dramatic play.
3. Use the checklist and check off when done.
4. Celebrate: "Our room is ready for a new week!"

**Tip:** Keep it positive—no "you made a mess," just "we reset together."

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#### 5) Special Foods Picture Sort

**Skills:** vocabulary, sorting, cultural awareness

**Materials:** photos of foods (printed or drawn), plates labeled "round," "long," "greens" (or "sweet/savory")



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## Directions

1. Say: "Some families eat special foods to celebrate."
2. Show 1 photo at a time and ask: "Where does it go?"
3. Sort together and count items in each group.
4. Optional: children draw one "special food" they like at home.

**Tip:** Keep it simple no claims like "this food always means..." since traditions vary.



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