

9 Real Ways to Ask and Answer Questions About Age in Chinese

Guide

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Ask someone's age

The most common ways

The simplest way to ask someone how old they are:

你今年多少岁?

(Nǐ jīnnián duōshǎo suì?)

You can also ask: What year were you born in?

你几几年的?

(Nǐ jǐ jǐ nián de?)

你是哪一年出生的?

(Nǐ shì nǎ yī nián chūshēng de?)

This format is most commonly used in casual conversations, such as talking to a friend, but there are other more informal and formal ways to ask:

Asking the younger

There are 3 main ways to ask the younger one how old they are:

你几岁?

(Nǐ jǐ suì?)

你多大了?

(Nǐ duōdàle?)

你多大年纪了?

(Nǐ duōdà niánjì le?)

When you're asking children or someone who is at your age or younger than you about their age, you don't have to be as formal.

Note that 你几岁 could only be used to ask the kids.

Asking the elderly

It's important to be formal and respectful when speaking to the elderly. The most polite ways to ask the elderly's age are:

您高寿?

(Nín gāoshòu?)

您贵庚?

(Nín guìgēng?)

Asking someone's zodiac sign

Do you ever feel a little awkward directly asking someone how old they are? Try asking what their Chinese Zodiac sign is instead. It's a repeating 12-year circle, and each year has a symbolic animal, starting with rat and ending with pig. It's fairly easy to calculate someone's age if you know their sign. The Zodiac is an important part of Chinese culture, and it's quite common to ask someone what their sign is to get to know them better.

你属什么?

(Nǐ shǔ shénme?)



Answer the age questions

Here let's go over how to answer these questions.

The common ways to respond:

我 XX 岁。

(Wǒ XX suì.)

e.g.

Q: 你今年多少岁? (Nǐ jīnnián duōshǎo suì?)

How old are you?

A: 我今年 30 岁。 (Wǒ jīnnián 30 suì.)

I'm 30.

我是 xx 年的。

(Wǒ shì xx nián de.)

e.g.

Q: 你几几年的? (Nǐ jǐ jǐ nián de?)

What year were you born in?

A: 我是 91 年的。 (Wǒ shì 91 nián de.)

I was born in 1991.

我属 X。

(Wǒ shǔ X.)

e.g.

Q: 你属什么? (Nǐ shǔ shénme?)

What is your Chinese zodiac?

A: 我属羊。 (Wǒ shǔ yáng.)

My Chinese zodiac sign is goat.

我还差 YY 就 XX 了。

(Wǒ hái chà YY jiù XX le.)

e.g.

Q: 你多大年纪? (Nǐ duō dà niánjì?)

How old are you?

A: 我还差三年就二十了。(Wǒ hái chà sān nián jiù èrshí le.)

I'm three years away from being 20.

The general ways to respond:

If you don't want to respond with your exact age, you can also make more general statements like:

我 X 十多岁。

(Wǒ X shí duō suì.)

e.g.

我五十多岁。(Wǒ wǔshí duō suì.)

I'm in my fifties.

我 X 十好几啦。

(Wǒ X shí hǎojǐ la.)

e.g.

我五十好几啦。(Wǒ wǔshí hǎojǐ la.)

I'm in my fifties.

我 X 十出头。

(Wǒ X shí chūtóu.)

e.g.

我二十出头。(Wǒ èrshí chūtóu.)

I'm in my early twenties.

If your birthday is coming up, you can also say that you're almost X:

我快 XX 啦。

(Wǒ kuài XX la.)

e.g.

我快 45 啦。(Wǒ kuài 45 la.)

I'm almost 45.

我不到 XX。

(Wǒ bù dào XX.)

e.g.

我不到 45。(Wǒ bù dào 45.)

I'm almost 45.

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