New Year’s Trivia for Seniors

Round 1: Times Square and American traditions

1. In what year did the first Times Square New Year’s Eve ball drop take place?
2. During which war was the Times Square ball drop paused, with crowds observing a minute of silence instead?
3. Which newspaper gave Times Square its name?
4. Which bandleader and his Royal Canadians were known as “Mr. New Year’s Eve”?
5. Which TV personality created “New Year’s Rockin’ Eve,” which first aired in 1972?
6. Which college football game, nicknamed “The Granddaddy of Them All,” is usually played on New Year’s Day?
7. Every surface of a Rose Parade float must be covered with what?
8. Which California city hosts the Rose Parade on New Year’s Day?
9. In which city do the Mummers march in a famous New Year’s Day parade?

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Round 1: Times Square and American traditions (continued)

10. In what year did Congress first make New Year’s Day a holiday for federal workers in Washington, D.C., along with Christmas, the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving?

Round 2: Traditions around the world

11. In Spain, how many grapes do people traditionally eat as the clock strikes midnight?
12. What do Scots call their New Year’s Eve celebration?
13. In Scottish tradition, what is it called when the first visitor of the new year steps into a home?
14. In Japan, how many times are temple bells rung on New Year’s Eve?
15. Which Australian city is famous for New Year’s fireworks over its Harbour Bridge and Opera House?
16. In the American South, which beans or peas are eaten on New Year’s Day for good luck?
17. In the South, cooked greens are eaten on New Year’s Day because they look like what?
18. In Brazil, what color clothing do many people wear on New Year’s Eve for peace and good luck?

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Round 2: Traditions around the world (continued)

19. Which dish do many Pennsylvania families eat on New Year’s Day for luck?

20. Which New Year, also called the Spring Festival, is celebrated with red envelopes and dragon dances?

Round 3: History and the calendar

21. Which two-faced Roman god gave January its name?

22. Which Roman leader introduced a new calendar in 46 B.C. that kept January 1 as the first day of the year?

23. Which ancient people are said to have made New Year’s promises to their gods about 4,000 years ago, vowing to pay their debts and return borrowed items?

24. Which pope gave his name to the calendar most of the world uses today?

25. Which Scottish poet is credited with the words of “Auld Lang Syne”?

26. What does “auld lang syne” roughly mean?

27. Which old man with a long white beard and an hourglass stands for the passing year?

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Round 3: History and the calendar (continued)

28. Who stands for the new year, often drawn wearing a sash and a top hat?

29. What is the Jewish New Year called?

30. What is the Persian New Year, celebrated on the first day of spring, called?

Round 4: Fun and party time

31. What do you call a promise to yourself made at the start of a new year?

32. What is a chilly New Year’s Day dip in icy water often called?

33. Which sparkling wine, named after a region of France, is famous for New Year’s toasts?

34. Which Pacific island nation is among the first places on Earth to welcome the new year?

35. Which U.S. territory in the South Pacific is among the last inhabited places to welcome the new year?

36. The very first Times Square ball was made of iron and wood. About how many light bulbs did it have?

New Year’s Trivia for Seniors

Round 4: Fun and party time (continued)

37. Besides the ball, what showers down on the Times Square crowd at midnight?

38. What noisy party favor do people blow at the stroke of midnight?

39. If you live in the Pacific time zone, what time is it at home when the ball drops in Times Square?

40. What is the last day of the year called?

New Year’s Trivia for Seniors — Answers

1. 1907 (on December 31, 1907, to welcome 1908)
2. World War II (1942 and 1943)
3. The New York Times
4. Guy Lombardo
5. Dick Clark
6. The Rose Bowl
7. Flowers or other natural materials, such as seeds, bark and leaves
8. Pasadena
9. Philadelphia
10. 1870
11. Twelve, one for each chime
12. Hogmanay
13. First-footing
14. 108
15. Sydney
16. Black-eyed peas
17. Money (folded dollar bills)
18. White
19. Pork and sauerkraut
20. Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year)
21. Janus
22. Julius Caesar
23. The Babylonians
24. Pope Gregory XIII
25. Robert Burns, who reworked an older Scottish song
26. “Old long since,” or days gone by
27. Father Time
28. Baby New Year
29. Rosh Hashanah
30. Nowruz
31. A resolution
32. A polar bear plunge (or polar bear swim)
33. Champagne
34. Kiribati (Samoa and Tonga are also among the first)
35. American Samoa
36. 100 (25-watt bulbs)
37. Confetti
38. A noisemaker (party horn)
39. 9 p.m.
40. New Year’s Eve