

## First Word of the New Year

For Vietnamese people, literacy was once seen as a gateway to the future. On the occasion of the new year, people would seek to have letters written to create for themselves good fortune for the year ahead – and out of respect for tradition and knowledge.

[www.englishtreasure.asia](http://www.englishtreasure.asia)

As most people were once illiterate, those who did the writing were teachers or scribes. The words commonly asked for would speak of luck, wealth, peace, virtue, endurance, and love. This tradition continues, and scribes can still be found to write messages of good fortune in ink on red paper – the colour that symbolises luck, life, and rebirth. Each word is written in the ancient Chinese-inspired script with style and grace, reflecting the skill of those who are no longer mere scribes, but masters of calligraphy.

[youtube.com/EnglishTreasure](https://youtube.com/EnglishTreasure)

Despite people now being capable of writing for themselves, the tradition continues and has even become more popular. It now represents as much a respect for tradition as a wish for the future – a symbol of one's values and a continued respect for the skill and learning of the calligraphers who perform the ancient art.

[www.englishtreasure.asia](http://www.englishtreasure.asia)

Why did people in the past not write new year's letters for themselves?

[youtube.com/EnglishTreasure](https://youtube.com/EnglishTreasure)

What kind of paper is used for new year's letters?

What letter do you want written for the new year?