



Twenty-four
Solar Terms

二十四节气

王佳 © 编著



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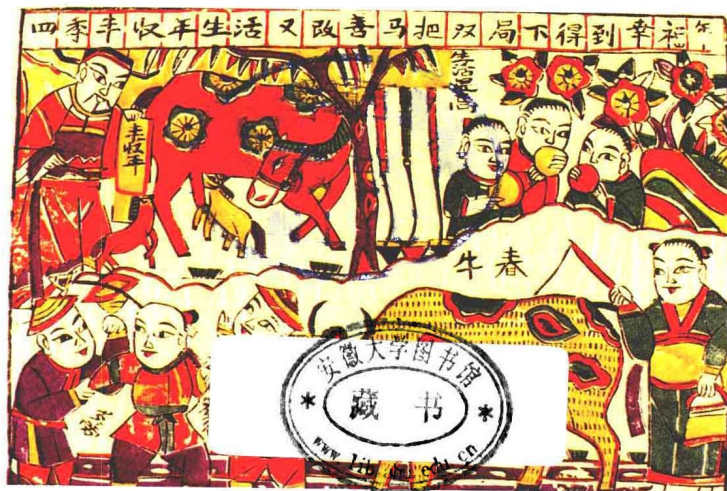
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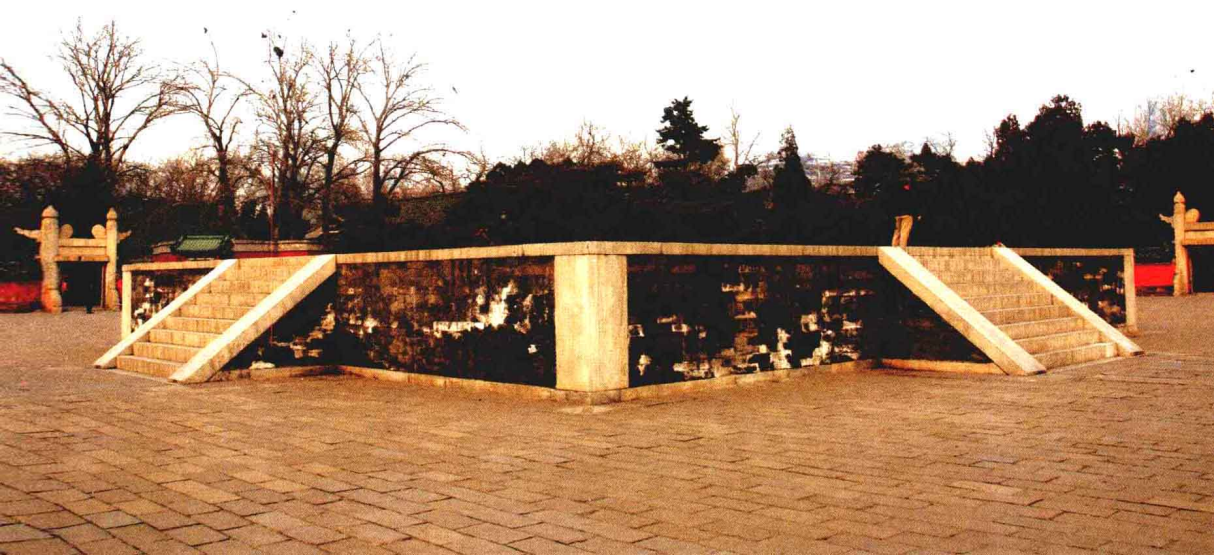
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中国是世界上最早发明历法的国家之一，二十四节气是中国历法的重要组成部分。中国古代以农业立国，有着灿烂辉煌的农业文化，二十四节气则是农耕文明的重要体现。二十四节气是古代劳动人民对天文、气候、

China is the earliest country ever applying the calendric system in the world, in which the Twenty-four Solar Terms constitutes a significant part. The ancient China was mainly founded on the basis of agriculture and therefore created a brilliant agricultural culture. And the Twenty-four Solar Terms





农业生产等各方面经验的总结，是指导农事活动的重要依据，至今仍与人们的日常生活密不可分。

本书从节气的由来，相关的气象物候、农事活动、民间风俗、养生等方面，对二十四节气做了系统的介绍和解读，帮助读者了解中国独特的历法分类，以及节气对生活、农事生产等方面的影响。

precisely reflect this distinct culture. The Twenty-four Solar Terms are conclusions on the study and experience regarding to astronomy, climate and agricultural production, it has been a major reference to conduct farm work and so far has close relationship with people's daily life.

This book gives a systematic introduction and explanation of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in terms of its origin and relative knowledge on weather and climate, phonological phenomena, agricultural activities, folk customs and health preserving, in order to help the audience to gain further understanding on this unique calendric system and its great impact on several aspects of Chinese people's life and agricultural production.



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二十四节气概述

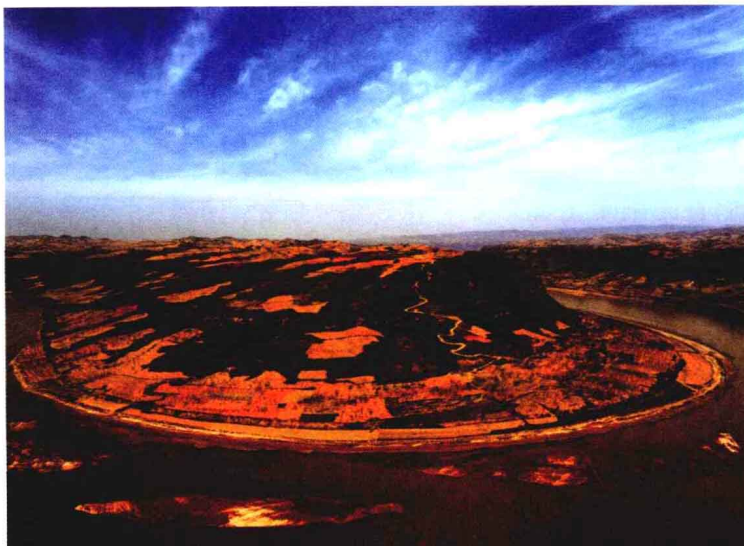
General Introduction to the Twenty-four Solar Terms

古代劳动人民按照太阳的运行来安排作息，日出而作，日落而息。随着占星学的发展，人们首先将黄道附近的星象按方位定了四象二十八宿，奠定了确立二十四节气的基础。

二十四节气反映了季节的变化，指导着农事活动，影响着百姓的日常生活，是中华民族世代相传的宝贵遗产。

Ancient Chinese people arranged their schedule according to the Sun's movement as they started one day's farm work with the sunrise and rested with the sunset. Accompanying with the development of ancient Astrology, people first defined the Four Symbols and Twenty-eight Mansions around the ecliptic, known as the foundation of the Twenty-four Solar Terms.

The Twenty-four Solar Terms reflect the seasonal changes, provide important guidance for the agricultural activities and influence the daily life of ordinary people, respected as the precious heritage passed down from generation to generation by Chinese people.





> 二十四节气的来历

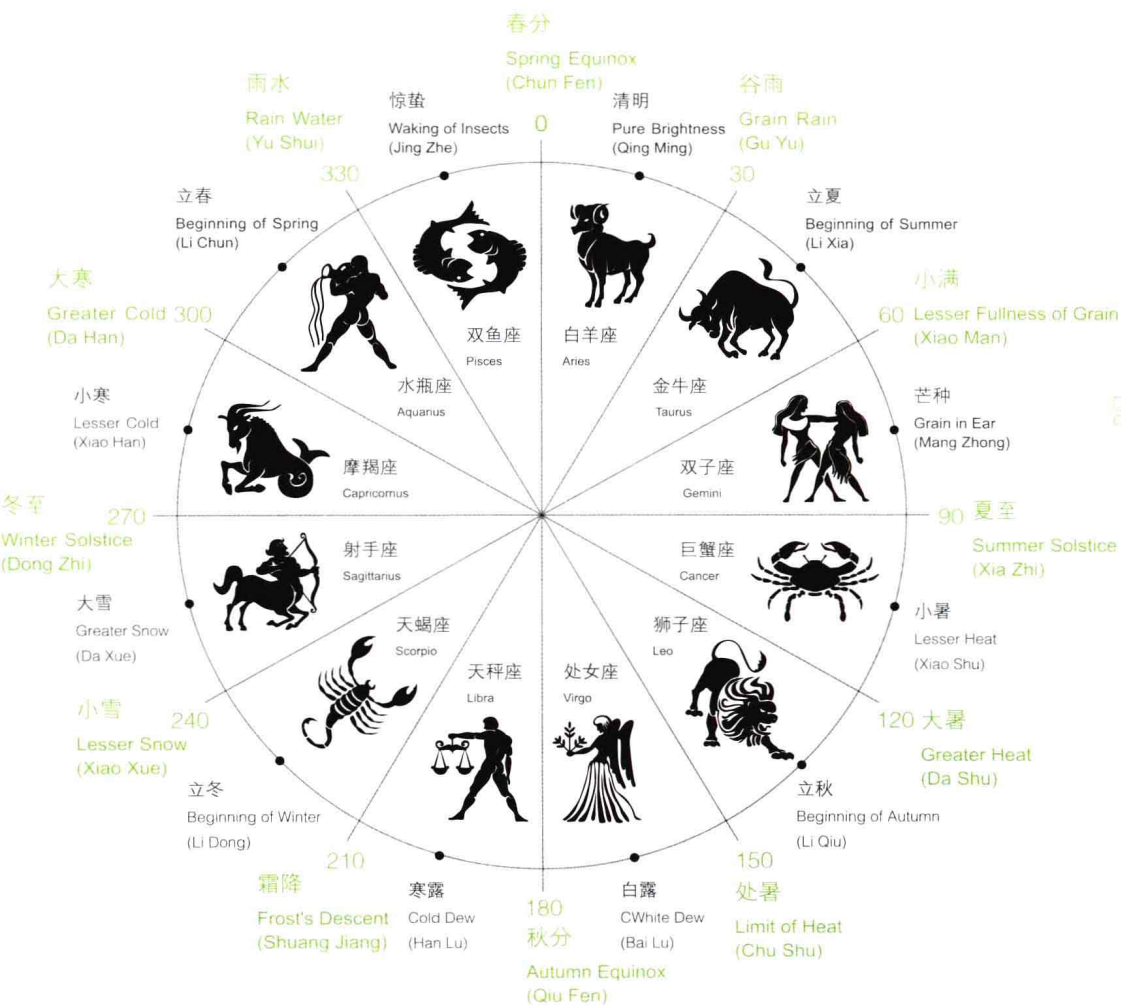
古代劳动人民根据太阳运行到达太阳黄经的位置，以及地面气候演变次序来确定二十四节气。地球公转一周为 360° ，二十四节气是将这 360° 平均分为24份。太阳从黄经（指太阳经度或天球经度，是在黄道坐标系统中用来确定天体在天球上位置的坐标值） 0° 起，沿黄经每运行 15° 所经历的时日即为一个节气。

西周时期（公元前1046年—公元前771年）农业、手工业的长足进步，促进了早期天文学的发展，人们首先确定了春、夏、秋、冬四季。春秋中期，人们使用土圭观测日影，即在地上垂直树立一个标杆，称为“表”，在旁边南北方向水平放置一把尺子，称为“圭”。

> Origin of the Twenty-four Solar Terms

Ancient laboring people defined the Twenty-four Solar Terms according to the position relative to the ecliptic longitude, and the change of seasons. The 360° revolution of the Earth is equally divided into 24 parts which are known as the Twenty-four Solar Terms. From the 0° ecliptic longitude (referring to the solar or celestial longitude, known as the coordinate figure in the ecliptic coordinate system to determine the position of celestial bodies on the celestial sphere), every 15° the Sun's movement is regarded as one solar term.

In the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.-771 B.C.), the great progress of agriculture and handicraft industry promoted the development of early astronomy. Ancient Chinese people first determined the four seasons as spring,



• 二十四节气与黄道十二宫图
Twenty-four Solar Terms and Zodiac

当太阳照到表上的时候，影子就会落在圭上，人们通过影子移动的规律、影子的长短来测量日影，并利用水均衡滴漏的原理，发明了漏壶来确定时刻。当时人们将日影最长和最短的日子定为冬至和夏至，将昼夜时间相等的两天定为春分和秋分。周朝时，又用这个方法确立了立春、立夏、立秋和立冬四个节气。秦汉时期，确立了另外十六个节气，并应用于农业生产。



• 日晷
Sundial

summer, autumn and winter. During the middle period of the Spring and Autumn Period (770 B.C.-476 B.C.), people began to employ the Earth sundial to observe the Sun's shadow, consisting of a stick vertically placed on the ground as the *Biao* (gnomon) and a ruler horizontally located beside the gnomon in both south and north directions, called as the *Gui* (sundial). When the Sun shines on the gnomon, the shadow will be presented on the sundial and through its regular movement pattern and length, people can measure the Sun's shadow. In addition, the clepsydra was invented to indicate the time based on the principle of water balance. At that time, people defined the days with the longest and shortest Sun's shadow as the Winter Solstice and Summer Solstice. When it comes to the Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C.-221 B.C.), the Beginnings of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter were further determined and in the Qin (221 B.C.-206 B.C.) and Han dynasties (206 B.C.-220 A.D.), the other 16 solar terms were ascertained and widely applied to the agricultural production.

The Twenty-four Solar Terms were officially recorded in *Huai Nan Zi: Patterns of Heaven* during the early



二十四节气正式的文字记载，出现在成书于西汉初年（前179—前121）的《淮南子·天文训》中。公元前104年，邓平等制定的《太初历》将二十四节气作为历法收录，明确了二十四节气的天文位置。二十四节气根据太阳在黄道上位置变化规律，总结出黄河流域中下游地区，在一个回归年（从地球上看，太阳围绕天球的黄道一周的时间，即太阳中心从春分点到春分点所经历的时间，又称“太阳年”）当中，天文、气象、物候和农事活动等方面的规律和特征，并依此来指导农事。

二十四节气的制定发源于黄河中下游地区。黄河流域是中国古代农业文明的发源地。黄河中下游地区位于北纬 30° 至 40° ，一年四季气候分明，阳光水分充足，而且地势平坦，土地肥沃，非常适宜耕作。从二十四节气形成到完备的时期里，黄河中下游地区一直是政治、经济和文化的中心。二十四节气基本概括了自然现象的变化规律，记载了自然中的物候现象（指动植物生命活动的季节性现象，以及一年中特定时间出现的气象、天

years of the Western Han Dynasty (179 B.C.-121 B.C.). In 104 B.C., Deng Ping with other professionals defined and recorded the Twenty-four Solar Terms as the calendar in *Taichu Calendar*, and clarified the astronomical position of the Twenty-four Solar Terms. According to the rule of the Sun's position change along the ecliptic, the Twenty-four Solar Terms concluded the regulation and characteristics of the astronomy, weather, phenology and agricultural activities for the regions of the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River within one tropical year (the length of time that the Sun takes to move around the ecliptic of the celestial sphere, as seen from the Earth and also known as a solar year). Therefore, it is also the calendar to guide the agricultural activities.

The creation of the Twenty-four Solar Terms originates from the regions of the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, known as the place of origin of ancient agricultural culture in China. These regions are located in the area between the 30° and 40° northern latitude and have distinct four seasons all the year round, with adequate sunshine and rainfall, flat landscape and fertile soil, which are all wonderful conditions



• 山西乾坤湾

黄河流域是华夏民族的发祥地，乾坤湾地处黄河中游山西黄土高原腹地，是远古祖先生息繁衍的中心区域之一。

Qiankun Bay in Shanxi Province

The Chinese nation originates from the Yellow River basin and the Qiankun Bay is located in the hinterland of the Loess Plateau along the midstream of the Yellow River, known as one of the central areas for ancient Chinese ancestors to live and multiply.

文现象），反映了黄河中下游地区的气候条件和农业特点，对农业发展起到了积极的促进作用。由于二十节气通俗易懂，指导性强，因

for cultivation. With the development of the Twenty-four Solar Terms, these regions had been treated as the political, economic and cultural centre of China. The Twenty-four Solar Terms generally summarise the changing law of natural phenomena, record the phonological phenomena (referring to the seasonal changes of animals and plants, as well as the meteorological and astronomical phenomena of certain periods in a year), and reflect the climatic conditions and

此在中国各地都得到了推广，并因地制宜得到了广泛的应用。

节气在公历中的日期基本固定，分布在一年12个月里，上半年在每月的6日、21日前后，下半年在

agricultural characteristics of the regions of the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, playing a positive role in promoting the agricultural development. Since this calendar is understandable and valuable in guiding agricultural activities,

二十四节气歌

春雨惊春清谷天，夏满芒夏暑相连，
秋处露秋寒霜降，冬雪雪冬小大寒。
上半年是六廿一，下半年是八廿三。
每月两节日期定，最多相差一两天。

Ballad of Twenty-four Solar Terms

The first half of this ballad is composed with a string of individual characters (each took from the corresponding Chinese term to together represent the Twenty-four Solar Terms in chronological order for people to remember); and the second half indicates their approximate dates in the Gregorian calendar.

Ballad of Twenty-four Solar Terms

*Chun Yu Jing Chun Qing and Gu's Day,
Xia Man Mang Xia and Shu sequentially,
Qiu Chu Lu Qiu Han and Shuang coming,
Dong Xue Xue Dong Xiao and Da.
On the 6th and 21st in the first half year,
On the 8th and 23rd in the second half year.
Each month has two solar terms,
The exact date is around within one or two days.*



- 《菊花螃蟹图》齐白石（近代）
Chinese Painting: *Chrysanthemums and Crabs*, by Qi Baishi (Modern Times)

the Twenty-four Solar Terms were popularised in China at that time, and widely applied to local conditions.

The dates of the Solar Terms are fixed in the Gregorian calendar, distributed in twelve months of a year, known as the 6th and 21st of each month in the first half year and the 8th and 23rd of each month in the second half year, with one to two days' difference. There are two Solar Terms in a month: the one in the beginning of the first half month is called as first terms (*Jieqi*) and the other one in the middle of the latter half month is known as middle terms (*Zhongqi*). It is the same with the lunar calendar, and there are two solar terms in one month averagely, also known as the first terms and middle terms. With regards to the leap month in lunar leap year, there is only one Solar Term without the middle term. In general, first terms and middle terms appear respectively with the duration of 15 days. At present, people unify the first and middle terms as the Solar Terms.

The Twenty-four Solar Terms include first terms and middle terms which respectively appear in the beginning of the month (around 6th or 8th) and in the end of the month (21st