

Khmer New Year in Cambodia

Source: <https://www.yourphnompenh.com/khmer-new-year-in-cambodia/>

Khmer New Year, or 'Bon Chol Chhnam Thmei' in the Khmer language, is the greatest traditional festival and national holiday in Cambodia, and the celebration lasts for three days. Khmer New year starts on April the 13th, 14th or 15th depending on the ancient horoscope "Maha Sangkran", 2021 it starts on 14th of April. The majority of the Cambodians are still farmers and Khmer New Year marks the end of the harvest season when farmers enjoy the fruits of their labor and relax before the start of the rainy season.



Most of the Phnom Penh residents will pack their bags and get ready to head out to the countryside to celebrate Khmer New Year. Phnom Penh will be left seemingly quiet during these days, so if you want to experience the celebration you should also pack your bag and head out to any of the villages on the country side.

The first day of Khmer new year is called "Maha Sangkran." Sangkran means movement and refers to that the sun is moving into a new Zodiac sign, and Maha means great. Some say that Maha Sangkran means welcome to the

new spirits. In the morning the Cambodians will go to the temple and offer food to the monks and receive blessings. During this time the Cambodians clean and decorate their homes and prepare fruits and drinks on a table or in their spirit house to welcome the new spirits. Elderly people like to meditate or pray the Dharma because they believe that any spirit that comes to their home will stay with them throughout the whole year and take care of their family.

The second day is called "Wanabot" and it is the day that they offer gifts to parents, grandparents, and elders. In the evening of this day many Cambodians will go to the temple and build a mountain of sand to remember their ancestors who have passed away, and have the monks give them blessings of happiness and peace.

The third day is called "Leung Sakk" and this is the first day of the new year. In the morning the Cambodians go to the temple and perform a ceremony where the mountain of sand gets blessed. The last ceremony is called "Pithi Srang Preah" and the purpose of this ceremony is to honor and to give a special cleansing to Buddha Statues, the monks, elders, grandparents, and parents. During this ceremony the participants apologize for any mistakes they have made during the last year.

The Khmer New Year is not only a great festival, it is also an opportunity to pass on the Cambodian traditions to the next generations.



April 2021 Calendar

Autism Awareness Month

National Minority Health Month

- 2 – Good Friday (Christian)
- 2 – World Autism Day
- 4 – Easter (Christian)
- 7 – World Health Day
- 7-8 Yom HaShoah - Holocaust Memorial Day
- 12 – Hindu New Year (Hindu)
- 13 – Ramadan Starts (Muslim)
- 13-15 – Khmer New Year
- 22 – International Earth Day
- 23-24 - Gathering of Nations (Native American)
- 27 – Theravada New Year (Buddhist)

10 Ways to Make Your Interpreter's Life Easier

by Kate Dzubinski

Source: <https://www.altalang.com/beyond-words/10-way-to-help-interpreters/>

The burden of a successful interpretation encounter often feels like it rests with the person interpreting the conversation. But there are things you, as a person requesting an interpreter, can do to make sure the conversation goes off without a hitch. (There are also things you can do to ensure the conversation is not emotionally exhausting for everyone!)

Some of the most important keys to success occur before the conversation even begins:

1. Let the interpreter know what the general topic of conversation will be. If you are working with a contractor, tell the agency when you make the request. This allows the interpreter to prepare the words, concepts, skills, and stamina they will need.
2. Reduce or remove distractions if you can. Ask for TVs to be turned off, occupy children if needed, ask for quiet.
3. If you are working with an agency interpreter, provide an opportunity to remove internal distractions. Offer space/time for the interpreter to do any of the following: use the bathroom, drink water or coffee, eat a snack. They are about to do a mental workout, you need them to render peak performance, and you don't know what they just came from.
4. Plan for breaks or for two interpreters. The standard amount of time you should expect quality performance from an interpreter is 30-60 minutes. Research shows that after an hour, interpreters begin to make mistakes without realizing it. If you can't give your interpreter a break after that amount of time, you need to think of this conversation as a relay race. Plan to have a second interpreter who can swap out with your first interpreter. If need be, after another 30-60 minutes, your first interpreter can swap back in.

In the flow of conversation:

5. Prioritize turn taking, especially when a bilingual person is present. Politely enforce it if the other person in the conversation doesn't. You can say, "Sorry, could you please let the interpreter finish speaking, so we can all stay on the same page?"
6. Pause to give your interpreter time to interpret, and once they start, don't interrupt them. Don't start speaking again until they have finished repeating (in the target language) what you've said.
7. If your interpreter seems to flounder or struggle, try saying fewer things at a time. Shorter is easier to remember, and therefore easier to repeat well (meaning accurately).
8. Manage interruptions on behalf of the interpreter – defend their turn to speak. If someone interrupts them, defend the interpreter from interruption so they don't have to. Pausing an interpretation taxes concentration and makes it way harder to correctly repeat (meaning interpret) what you said. If you can't prevent the interruption, just repeat what you said yourself, or ask the speaker to repeat themselves, so the interpreter can start fresh. You can say, "as I was saying," and then repeat yourself or ask "what did you say before?"

After the conversation:

9. Debrief the encounter. If there was a moment when something seemed off, ask your interpreter if they noticed anything about it, and if so what. They may be able to share additional linguistic or cultural insight, or may have picked up on an emotion you missed. An interpreter can give you more information about what they observed in the encounter, and you can compare notes, or decide on things you'd like to go back and ask about. This is a great learning opportunity for you, and a de-stressing moment for the interpreter – professionalism requires that we hold our own voices back during the encounter, but we sometimes have valuable perspectives or information to share afterwards.
10. Remember to thank your interpreter. Acknowledge what they did. Give compliments if they're warranted.

