

Chinese Do Not Usually Accept a Gift

Chinese do not usually accept a gift, invitation or favor when it is first presented. Politely refusing two or three times is thought to reflect modesty and humility. Accepting something in haste makes a person look aggressive and greedy, as does opening it in front of the giver. Traditionally the monetary value of a gift indicated the importance of a relationship, but due to increasing contact with foreigners in recent years, the symbolic nature of gifts has taken foot.

Present your gifts with both hands. And when wrapping, be aware that the Chinese ascribe much importance to color. Red is lucky, pink and yellow represent happiness and prosperity; white, grey and black are funeral colors. The popular items include cigarette lighters, stamps (stamp collecting is a popular hobby), T-shirt, the exotic coins make a good gift to Chinese.

The following gifts should be avoided:

1. **White or yellow flowers** (especially *chrysanthemums*), which are used for funerals.
2. **Pears.** The word for Pear in Chinese sounds the same as separate and is considered bad luck.
3. **Red ink** for writing cards or letters. It symbolizes the end of a relationship.
4. **Clocks** of any kind. The word clock in Chinese sounds like the expression "end of life".

China is one of those wonderful countries where tipping is not practiced and almost no one asks for tips. The same thing goes even in Hong Kong and Macao, except in some luxurious hotels.