

# 自己做：九九消寒图

## DIY: Counting to Spring

The '9x9 Disappearing Winter Drawing' has been painted to count 81 days from the Winter Solstice Festival (冬至节). It was used to help people welcome Spring!

The first day begins with bare branches.

Everyday, a new blossom is added.

When the painting is in full bloom, Spring will be well under way!

*Learn more about the Winter Solstice Festival in the China Memories book series.*  
<https://www.deziremi.co.uk/shop/p/china-memories-simplified-chinese>







No one really knows why, where or how the 九九消寒 tradition began.

We only know that it has been around from as early as c. 500 AD! (Possibly longer!)

### Why did they do this?

The winters were long and harsh, so people needed something hopeful. Most importantly, it helped them to decide the best time to plant a new crop.

### Why '9'?

The number '9' sounds the same as the word 'long'. So after a long time waiting, Spring will finally be here!

九 ("jiǔ"; nine) = 久 ("jiǔ"; long)

There are lots of other ways that people observed the 81 days. Including songs, calligraphy, diagrams and charts!