

New Year Celebrations Mark 2017 Around the World

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As the world prepares to ring in 2017 tonight, Times Square in U.S. is all set for a gala event in which a 12-foot-wide, 11,000-pound geodesic sphere will descend at midnight to ring in the year 2017. The mayor had similar doubts: "I'm not quite sure why a million people want to stand in the freezing cold for long periods of time", he said this morning.

The first New Year's Eve Ball was made of iron and wood and adorned with 125 25-watt lightbulbs, was 5 feet in diameter and weighed 700 pounds. "We are so ready for December 31", said Jeffrey Strauss, the co-producer of the Times Square New Year's Eve events.

The New Year's Eve tradition began in 1907 when a time ball was dropped as part of a public celebration hosted by The New York Times at its building in Times Square. Although that's great for them, the rest of us would much rather celebrate the New Year in the comfort of ours, or someone else's, warm home.

[Earthcam](#) will offer its own live stream of Times Square based on local webcams throughout the day on its website as well as via its iOS and Android apps.

"If you're coming down to Times Square, rest assured that it will be a safe venue", Police Commissioner James O'Neill said.

Fireworks light the sky above the Quadriga at the Brandenburg Gate shortly after midnight in Berlin, Germany, Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017. Dozens of 20-ton sanitation trucks weighted with an extra 15 tons of sand will block off streets leading to the celebration zone.

Blocker trucks have also taken up positions across town near Trump Tower since President-elect Donald Trump was elected in November.

But many countries are somber, wary of a new year of politics and security threats.

Specially armed counterterrorism units and bomb-sniffing dogs were on guard throughout Times Square. The country's notorious tradition of unsafe New Year's Eve celebrations persisted after President Rodrigo Duterte delayed to next year his ban on the use of powerful firecrackers, often worsened by celebratory gunfire. There are many other wonderful celebrations as well.