



## Brief fengshui introduction

Fengshui, or geomancy, is a kind of traditional Chinese practice of determining the location of a house, tomb, or other items that are believed to have a vital bearing on the fortunes of a family, owner, or user. With a long history and tradition, fengshui originated from theories of *yin-yang*, and the five elements.

Various comments and disputes abound about the topic of fengshui with some considering it an integrated science, combining longtime perceptions of the environment, geography, and health, while some believe it is nothing more than just superstition, hindering Chinese innovation in construction and interior design.

Throughout the ages, many documents about fengshui have been maintained. They show that much of ancient fengshui theory dealt with the landscaping of mausoleums and palaces. Contemporary fengshui covers a wide range of topics -- from building skyscrapers to housing concerns of common citizens.

The word fengshui first appeared in a book by Guo Pu during the [Jin Dynasty \(265-420\)](#), but its fundamental basis and core thoughts originated from *Yijing*. At the beginning, fengshui was a kind of practical and simple skill in choosing the residential locations. Later, with the spread of systematic thought of the philosophy of the "harmony between man and nature," and the continuous enrichment and increasing influence of *Yijing* in social life, fengshui also began to incorporate a grand theoretical system, and accumulated rich experience. It largely influenced and altered the living environments and lifestyles of Chinese people.

As a culture growing uniquely out of china, fengshui provides a set of methods to make correct choices and avoid misfortune. Dealing with the relationship between man and nature, fengshui represents Chinese people's efforts in understanding, conforming to, altering, and harmonizing with nature.

Location selection, orientation, interior structure design, and overall arrangement are all important factors in fengshui. Living within their houses, human beings should feel the influences of nature, and houses can be adjusted to integrate the influences of information from nature. One's surrounds are thought to constantly influence people's moods, health, and in turn, their careers, fortunes, and even family relations. Sunshine, air, water, terrestrial magnetism, sound, color, moisture, radiation, and viruses are usually researched within the modern fengshui philosophy.

Meanwhile, with the use of knowledge in construction, astronomy, geography, physics, chemistry, biology, and aesthetics, fengshui tries to provide perfect conditions to cater to



people's physical and psychological needs. In short, fengshui refers to understanding and adjusting to the environment.

There are three major factors in fengshui. First is the grand environment, or the energy momentum in the specific space-time. Second is the small environment, or the conditions people live in. Third is people's morals. These factors greatly represent the Chinese notion of harmony of man with nature, and the attachment of great importance to human beings within fengshui theory.

However, in its longtime spread, great mystery and exaggeration have been mixed into fengshui theory, which partly leads to fengshui being considered superstition by some.

In Chinese history, many of the capital sites like [Xi'an](#), [Luoyang](#), [Kaifeng](#), Lin'an, [Beijing](#), and [Nanjing](#), as well as a number of provinces, prefectures, and county sites were elaborately selected by fengshui masters. Most of these places were chosen because of their encirclement by mountains and rivers, contributing to their advanced economies, cultures, science and technology, industry, and agriculture. Many are still bustling regional centers and have become even more prosperous after thousands of years.



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