



KUNG FU‘N’ FACTS!

Starting With Some Cool Stuff

- Including voice actors, **448 different people** put over **21,442 manweeks** into the film. That’s **107,210 mandays** or **857,680 manhours**.
- It took a total of **391 artists** to create “Kung Fu Panda” (the total crew number minus production staff and voice talent). “Kung Fu Panda” was **in production for approximately 4.5 years** (from Fall 2003 to Spring 2008).
- The “**Kung Fu Panda**” **Animation department** is comprised of animators from around the globe, including artists from the **USA, China, Canada, France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Philippines, Japan, Sweden, Belgium and Israel**.
- Every time a scene was finalized in Animation, the animator received **one fortune cookie** (with a customized fortune inside).
- During the development process, there was talk of **cutting one of the five** and making them **the Furious Four**...but everyone had grown so attached to them all that DreamWorks couldn’t part with any of the characters.
- The animators’ first pass shots of kung fu were choreographed in **2D** before being animated in **CGI**.
- There are **1,478 unique villagers** in the Valley of Peace and **2,306 spectators** in the stadium during the Dragon Warrior ceremony.
- It took a combined **54 systems** (including rockets, trails, lights and emitters) to create the single effect of Po riding the rocket chair into the stadium.

Now, About That Panda...

- The weirdest animation control was for Po’s uvula.
- Q: What do pandas eat? A: Mostly bamboo shoots, leaves and stems, plus some other vegetation.
Q: What do actors who voice pandas eat? A: Jack Black’s recording sessions always began with a plate of Koo Koo Roo chicken and creamed spinach.
- Jack stood during recording session, so that his physical activities would enhance the performance with subtle nuance. The animators loved capturing and transferring his subtle vocal and physical work (breathing, exerting effort, fumfering) to Po onscreen.
- Black’s adlibs and comic exploration of the character really helped to define Po in the very first recording session for “Kung Fu Panda.” Lines like “My tenders!,” “...because I just ate, and my kung fu might be better...later on” and—when Shifu hits and points out his untuned arms—“Those are sensitive in the flabby parts!” all came out of that session.
- In the recording booth, Jack liked to always lay down a couple of “vanilla” reads of the sequences before layering with his own “special sauce.” More often than not, the third take was pure gold.
- Po has a special “fighting fist” control that he only uses when he’s engaging in kung fu.
- *Betcha You Didn’t Know...* Pandas eat mostly bamboo, which makes up about 99% of their diet—the rest is other plants and meat. As they only digest about 20% of the bamboo, they have to eat a lot of it...anywhere from 25 to 85 pounds of the stuff in a day.
- *Chow time!* A panda spends 10 to 16 hours a day eating.
- Po’s cheeks were rebuilt during the film to allow him to stuff his mouth with more food!
- Compared to all bears, giant pandas (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*) have the smallest habitat (geographically speaking). Wildly popular, yet rare and elusive, they’re only found in the mountainous regions of southwestern China, and then only in areas of plentiful bamboo growth. Of the 1,600 pandas believed to exist in the wild, approximately 1,000 are located in the Sichuan province. They are classified as Endangered Species and, because of their reliance on bamboo, are particularly susceptible to the loss of their habitat. Their lifespan is between 25 and 30 years. Even under the best of circumstances in the wild, panda birth rate is relatively low...and even lower in captivity. The cub is born tiny and blind and remains with the mother for 1½ years.
- *Blame It On Nixon:* The US popularity of pandas skyrocketed when Chairman Mao Tse-Tung made a gift of two pandas—Hsing-Hsing and Ling-Ling—to President Richard M. Nixon in 1972. (Many credit Nixon with opening friendly relations with the Communist nation as a result of his ’72 visit.) This ceremonial gift of high honor—which the Chinese government continues to bestow on select visiting diplomats—gave rise to the term “panda diplomacy.”

The practice has since slowed down, as conservationists campaign to keep the endangered species in its native habitat.

Leopards and Tigers and Panda Bears and...

- The father of James Hong (who voices Po’s noodle-making dad, Mr. Ping) was actually a noodle-maker, and while reading his lines, Hong would crave noodles.
- Angelina Jolie (Tigress) sports a tattoo of a tiger on her back—talk about living the part.
- One of Jackie Chan’s trademarks—the enthusiastic “thumbs-up!”—is also one of Monkey’s (his animated, onscreen persona).
- The voice of Baby Tai Lung is supplied by director Mark Osborne’s six-year-old son Riley.
- The double fist punch inadvertently became Tai Lung’s signature move (he does it three times in the film).
- While sitting in on a recording session, Jack Black’s wife, Tanya Hayden (a puppeteer and musician), was pulled in to lay down a voice as well. She can be heard as the Bunny Waitress in the Tea House during Po’s dream sequence.
- Two of Po’s pig friends are voiced by Kyle Gass (the other half of Jack Black’s band Tenacious D) and J.R. Reed (who plays an obsessed fan in “Tenacious D and the Pick of Destiny”). The crew began calling Po’s pig friends (who are unnamed onscreen) the “Shaw Brothers,” as an homage to the famous Hong Kong kung fu studio.
- An early dual recording session with Jack Black and Dustin Hoffman—pairing them for the first time in Hollywood!—helped to define their individual characters and the conflict between them. Much of the dialogue heard when Shifu trains Po using food came out of that playful session.
- The chunk of wood that Po picks up as a souvenir of Tigress’ ‘awesomeness’ was deemed “the love chunk” by the Layout department.

How Things Change

A truth of moviemaking: scripts change. Many of the points below were explored in early development of “Kung Fu Panda” and later abandoned, since they no longer served the film as well as they did once upon a time.

- *You have WHAT in the basement?* Early in development, Po’s final training ‘test’ was to catch a single droplet of water as it fell off a mystical root found growing down into a sacred chamber under the Jade Palace.

- In the first storyboarded version of the Wuxi Finger Hold, Shifu used a Chinese Finger Trap to catch Po.
- Mantis started out as a villain—although still a member of the Furious Five, he was actually a traitor conspiring with Tai Lung from the inside.
- At one point, Po lived with his mother away from the Valley in the bamboo forest. She supported herself and Po by crafting wind chimes from bamboo, which Po attempted to peddle in the Valley around the time of the Dragon Warrior Ceremony.
- Another version saw Po living amongst many pandas in the bamboo forest, with all pandas making and selling wind chimes for a living.
- In early versions of the story, Po lived with Shifu, who was a retired kung fu master.

Animators Look to the East

- Filmmakers took inspiration from some pretty remarkable Chinese films...the rooftop chase was informed by some of the wireworks in “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,” and the Jade Palace interior pays homage to the King’s palace in “Hero.”
- Chinese art provided reference and directly influenced many of the film’s designs: a Chinese calendar appears in the center of the outdoor theater, and the Jade Palace floor features the five elements.
- The Animation department participated in a tai chi class and many kung fu workshops in order to analyze the different styles of kung fu and to understand the mechanics of the motion.
- Per a request from the directors, the Rigging department developed a special control to facilitate animating the loose skin under Oogway’s neck, termed his “waddle.”
- The bridge sequence began as a visual development idea, as one of a series of epic feats in Tai Lung’s journey from prison back to the Valley of Peace. Huge gorillas guarded the Infinite Bridge and, as Tai Lung defeated them (and every other set of specialty guards along his path), they tagged along like groupies, forming a gang of followers.
- The rope bridge in “Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom” was used as a reference for the Infinite Bridge.
- Story artist Jed Diffenderfer executed the first story pass using the bridge as a fighting location for Tai Lung and the Five, including whipping wind and a seemingly elastic bridge to render the battle more dynamic and death-defying.

Get Out Your Abacus

- The Jade Palace is made of 88,100 different surfaces/pieces.

- There are 22,388 scrolls in the palace scroll room.
- The prison is over 3,000-feet deep.
- Master Crane has 6,019 feathers on his body.
- Viper has 120 bones along the length of her body.
- There are 370 planks along the rope bridge where Tai Lung confronts the Furious Five. In the course of the battle, 174 of them are broken.
- The speed at which Tigress travels through those planks: 40.9 miles per hour. The length of the rope bridge: 629 feet.
- The total amount of individual confetti pieces used in sq 600 (the scene where Po is chosen as the Dragon Warrior) is exactly 1,040,229!
- Number of petals it took to make Oogway disappear: 37,517 petals. (Number of days FX artist Nik Pavlov didn't shave until his shot was approved: 27 days...he eventually caved for his girlfriend, which was probably a good thing, as it took Pavlov six months to complete the shot.)
- Number of dust particles in the dust cloud created after Tai Lung dives into Po, causing an explosion: 33,588,526 dust particles.
- Number of individual pieces of debris thrown when Tai Lung knocks down the crumbling building: 826 individual puzzle pieces.
- Number of tiles Po sends raining down on Tai Lung, who climbs those tiles: 8,260 tiles total.
- Number of arrows that shower down on Tai Lung during his prison escape: 1,500 arrows.
- When Po and the Five eat together, there are 64 noodles in each bowl.
- Number of acupuncture needles in Po's back while talking to Tigress: 133.
- Number of particles that compose the disintegrating chair that Po blows up with fireworks: 953,593 particles.