

《外媒看中国：中国球迷买假病假条看世界杯》

Chinese fraudsters are doing a roaring trade in fake sick notes designed to help football fans skip work during this month ' s World Cup.

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The 11-hour time difference between China and host nation Brazil means that only early risers will be able to follow the action here, with many games kicking off at 3am local time.

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Unwilling to miss the pre-dawn matches, football-mad Chinese are reportedly turned to an underground network of counterfeiters, splashing out up to 300 yuan (£28.50) for doctor's notes allowing them to miss work after a long morning in the pub.

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"White collar soccer fans looking to score a day off to watch the upcoming World Cup in Brazil can get an assist with fake online doctor's notes," the state-run Global Times said in a recent story about how Taobao, China's answer to eBay, was awash with the fabricated documents.

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For 100 yuan The Telegraph acquired a sick note. The apparently legitimate note and accompanying medical record purport to be from the respiratory department at Shanghai's Ruijin Hospital, one of the city's best.

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A Ruijin Hospital official said: "We have heard of the sick note before but never seen one." Employers were welcome to bring suspect paperwork to the hospital for investigation, the official added.

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Not all buyers were impressed with their purchases.

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“A fake. My company discovered and now I’ve been sacked,” one vented, in a furious online review. “Liars! Absolutely not to be trusted!”

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