

# Maya Writing

The Maya writing system was a combination of hieroglyphs, syllabograms (symbols for syllables), and logograms (symbols for words or concepts). They recorded information on bark-paper books called codices, though most were destroyed by Spanish colonizers.

## Codices, Hieroglyphs, Syllabograms, Logograms

The Maya writing system, one of the most advanced in the ancient Americas, used a combination of:

- **Hieroglyphs** – pictorial symbols representing sounds, words, or concepts.
- **Syllabograms** – symbols that represented syllables, which allowed for more detailed writing.
- **Logograms** – single symbols representing entire words or ideas.

The Maya wrote on **codices** (books made from bark paper coated in lime). Unfortunately, Spanish conquistadors burned most of these books, considering them pagan. Only four codices survive today, including the **Dresden Codex**, which contains detailed astronomical records.

## Writing, Math, and Science

### Maya Writing

- They used **hieroglyphs** (picture writing) to tell stories.
- Their books, called **codices**, were made from bark paper.
- Only **priests and nobles** could read and write.

### Maya Math

- They invented the **number zero** before Europeans!
- Their number system used **dots (1), bars (5), and shells (0)**.

### Maya Astronomy

- They built **observatories** to watch the stars.
- Their **calendar** was super accurate – better than the one we use today!