



Mayan Calendars

The Maya had three different calendars.

Their religious calendar was called the **Tzolk'in**. Tzolk'in was a 260-day calendar. It had two cycles, one lasting 20 days and one lasting 13 days. Each day had a name and a number. The name came from the 20 day cycle and the number came from the 13 day cycle.

Their solar calendar was called the **Haab'**. Haab' had 18 months that were each 20 long. There were also five extra "unlucky" days in the 19th month so the calendar had a total of 365 days in a year. They numbered the days in each month from 0 to 19.

These two calendars coincided every 52 years, when they would start on the same day. On this day, the Maya celebrated the New Fire Festival (El Fuego Nuevo) by putting out all the fires in every household and throwing away all clay utensils. The New Fire Festival was a celebration of renewal and new beginnings.

The third calendar, the **Long Count Calendar**, was used for historical purposes. It began on August 11, 3114 BC, which was the day that the Maya believed the world was created.

1. How many calendars did the Maya have?
2. What was the New Fire Festival?
3. When was the New Fire Festival celebrated?
4. What was the purpose of the Long Count Calendar?