

Maya Timeline

circa 15,000 - 12,000 BC – Asiatic hunter-gatherers cross from Asia to North America

circa 12,000 BC – Hunter-gatherers enter South America

circa 11,000 BC – The first hunter-gatherers settle in the Maya highlands and lowlands; obsidian spear points, stone tools and mammoth bones found in caves in the Yucatan

3114 BC – BC – According to the Mayan Long Count Calendar, the world is created

Archaic Period 7000-2000 BC

Early Pre-Classic Period 2000 BC – 1000 BC

- 2000 - 1000 BC – Farming villages spread throughout Maya region in the Yucatan and Maya highlands
- 1500 BC – Ball courts erected at Paso de la Amada on Pacific Coast
- 1400 BC – Olmec civilization develops
- 1100 BC – Settlements at Kaminaljuyú and Chalchuapa
- 1000 BC – Settlement at Copan

Middle Pre Classic 1000 BC – 300 BC

- 900 BC – First public structures are built at La Blanca, a village on the Pacific coast
- 800 – 600 BC – El Mirador begins construction of monumental buildings
- 800 – 400 BC – Decline of Olmec civilization
- 700 BC – Mayan writing is developing
- 600 BC – Settlement at Tikal
 - Maya begin farming to feed a growing population
- 500 BC – Trade flourishes at Lake Petén Itzá in present-day Guatemala
- 400 BC – Trade center established at Kaminaljuyú
 - First long count calendar dates carved in stone at Kaminaljuyu and Chalchuapa
- 300 BC – Maya adopt a society ruled by nobles and kings

Late Pre-classic Period 300 BC - 250 AD

- 100 BC – The city-state of Teotihuacán is founded and becomes the region's cultural, religious and trading center
- 100 BC – First Stela appears at Tikal
- 100 BC – Pyramid building begins
- 100 BC – Mayan calendars are established
- 100 AD – El Mirador abandoned
 - Tombs for nobles appear at Kaminaljuyú

- 100 – 400 AD – Migrations of highland Maya into Copan, from Chalchuapa and Kaminaljuyu areas

Classic Period – 250 AD – 900 AD – Golden Age of the Maya City-States

- 400 – City-state of Teotihuacán has significant influence on Maya Highlands
- circa 400s – City State of Tikal becomes the first great Mayan cultural and ceremonial center
- 426 – City-state of Copan is established by Yax K'uk Mo
- 560 – A coalition of city-states defeat Tikal
- 600 – Teotihuacán largely collapses
- 680 – Tikal revolts and regains independence
- 600-700 – The Caracol city-state, part of a coalition with Calakmul and others, prospers with some 120,000 people in a 65-square-mile metropolis
- 675 - Temple of Inscriptions at Palenque begun
- 683 – The Emperor Pacal dies
- 820 - Yax K'ik-Mo dynasty ended at Copan
- 900 – Tikal is abandoned
 - Copan is abandoned, first by elites, then a century later by commoners
 - Classic period of Maya civilization ends with the collapse of the southern lowland cities
 - Maya civilization continues in the highlands and the northern lowlands

Post-Classic 925 - 1500 – Maya City-states in the northern Yucatan continue to flourish.

- 900 – City State of Uxmal begins construction of House of the Governor and the Nunnery Quadrangle
- 925 – 1200 – Chichén Itzá city-state dominates northern Yucatan
- 1200 – A few Northern city states begin to be abandoned
- 1200 – 1250 – Chichén Itzá is largely abandoned
- 1283 – Mayapán becomes the most prominent city-state of the Yucatán
- 1441 – Mayapán is abandoned

1500 - Colonial Period Begins

1517 – Spanish Conquistador, Hernández de Córdoba, arrives in the Yucatan

1541 – Spanish conquer many of the Maya

1542 – Spanish city of Merida is founded