

Timeline of Writing Systems' Graphical Evolution

Modern Era (timescale change)

East Asia

Legend

Hellenic: Scripts derived from Greek

Chinese: Scripts derived from Oracle Bone

Northern Brahmi: Scripts derived from Brahmi in North India

Southern Brahmi: Scripts derived from Brahmi in South India

Semitic: Scripts derived from Proto-Sinaitic

Other: Independently derived scripts (graphically)

Over 10 million users

Over 100 million users

Not in Unicode

Script extinction then revival: - - -

Writing direction

Logograph: Words are distinct characters

Syllabary: Syllables are distinct characters

True alphabet: Consonants are distinct characters

Abjad: Vowels are on par with consonants

Abjida: Vowels are secondary, usually diacritics

Abjad: Vowels are optional or non-existent

Southeast Asia

South Asia

Central & West Asia

Africa

Europe, Anatolia, & Caucasus

Americas

East Asia

- Oracle Bone
- Large Seal
- Small Seal
- Clerical
- Regular / Traditional Chinese (Hanzi / Kanji / Hanja / Chu Han)
- Tangut
- Nushu
- Simplified Chinese
- Man'yōgana
- Katakana
- Hiragana
- Hentaigana
- Classical Yi
- Modern Yi

Southeast Asia

- Tibetan
- Marchen
- Phags-pa
- Zanabazar square
- Mongolian
- Old Uyghur
- Old Turkic
- Old Man
- Mon-Burmese
- Ahom
- Lik-Tai
- Tai Le
- Chakma
- Kawi
- Buhid
- Tagbanwa
- Hanunó'o
- Baybayin
- Batak
- Lontara / Bugis
- Kayah Li
- Javanese
- Old Sundanese
- Ulu
- Balinese
- Khmer
- Lai Tay / Tai Yo
- Tai Viet
- Sukhothai
- Thai
- Fakham
- Lao
- Pahawh Hmong
- Thaana
- Divhes Akuru
- Saurashtra
- Warang Citi
- Telugu
- Kannada
- Meitei
- Gupta
- Sharada
- Landa
- Khajuri
- Multani
- Khudabadi
- Gurmukhi
- Mahajani
- Ranjana
- Newari
- Prachalit / Newa
- Gaudi
- Tirhuta
- Bengali-Assamese
- Siddham
- Nagari
- Syllheti Nagri
- Kaithi
- Modi
- Gujarati
- Nandinagari
- Devanagari
- Masaram Gondi
- Yezidi
- Hamfirohinga
- Neo-Tifinagh
- Medefaidrin
- Osmanya
- Adiam
- N'ko
- Zaghawa / Beria
- Mende Kikaku
- Vai
- Braille
- Pitman shorthand
- Deseret
- Canadian Aboriginal
- Cherokee

South Asia

- Phags-pa
- Zanabazar square
- Mongolian
- Old Uyghur
- Old Turkic
- Old Man
- Mon-Burmese
- Ahom
- Lik-Tai
- Tai Le
- Chakma
- Kawi
- Buhid
- Tagbanwa
- Hanunó'o
- Baybayin
- Batak
- Lontara / Bugis
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Central & West Asia

- Indus
- Phoenician
- Aramaic
- Paleo-Hebrew
- Samaritan
- Ancient North Arabian
- Ancient South Arabian
- Ge'ez
- Libyco-Berber
- Tifinagh
- Ugaritic
- Old Persian Cuneiform
- Nabataean
- Hebrew
- Mandaic
- Khwarezmian
- Syriac
- Palmyrene
- Hatran
- Elymaic
- Inscriptional Pahlavi
- Sogdian
- Manichaean
- Avestan
- Book Pahlavi
- Inscriptional Parthian
- Psalter Pahlavi
- Yezidi
- Hamfirohinga
- Neo-Tifinagh
- Medefaidrin
- Osmanya
- Adiam
- N'ko
- Zaghawa / Beria
- Mende Kikaku
- Vai
- Braille
- Pitman shorthand
- Deseret
- Canadian Aboriginal
- Cherokee

Africa

- Proto-Sinaitic
- Ugaritic
- Old Persian Cuneiform
- Nabataean
- Hebrew
- Mandaic
- Khwarezmian
- Syriac
- Palmyrene
- Hatran
- Elymaic
- Inscriptional Pahlavi
- Sogdian
- Manichaean
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Europe, Anatolia, & Caucasus

- Anatolian Hieroglyphs
- Linear A
- Linear B
- Cypro-Minoan
- Cypriot
- Greek
- Carian
- Ancient North Arabian
- Ancient South Arabian
- Ge'ez
- Libyco-Berber
- Tifinagh
- Ugaritic
- Old Persian Cuneiform
- Nabataean
- Hebrew
- Mandaic
- Khwarezmian
- Syriac
- Palmyrene
- Hatran
- Elymaic
- Inscriptional Pahlavi
- Sogdian
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- Vai
- Braille
- Pitman shorthand
- Deseret
- Canadian Aboriginal
- Cherokee

Americas

- Maya
- Cherokee