

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

2) Black rods = negative numbers

• They could add and subtract with them, effectively realizing that subtraction is just a matter of combining positive and negative rods.

3. Indians (Brahmagupta, 7th century):

• Explicitly introduced negative numbers ("debts" and "fortunes").

• Brahmagupta writes rules like: a debt minus a debt is their difference, or if equal, zero.

• This already implies that subtraction can be reframed in terms of signed numbers.

4. Islamic & medieval European algebraists:

• Knew these rules, but were still hesitant about negatives (often seen as "fictitious" no.s).