

Tattooing Through the Ages

Tattoo History · Answer Key · 15 Questions

1. Which ancient culture is known for its tattooed mummies, suggesting tattooing was practiced as early as the Neolithic period?

- A) Ancient Egyptians**
- B) Indus Valley Civilization
- C) Mesoamerican Civilizations
- D) Ancient Greeks

2. The Ötzi the Iceman, a remarkably preserved mummy from the Alps, had tattoos primarily located on his body. What was a common theory regarding their purpose?

- A) Therapeutic, possibly for pain relief**
- B) Marks of social status
- C) Religious rituals
- D) Identification of tribal affiliation

3. In many Polynesian cultures, particularly among the Maori, what was the traditional name for tattooing, often involving intricate facial designs?

- A) Moko
- B) Ta moko**
- C) Tatau
- D) Pe'a

4. Which European explorer is credited with introducing the term 'tatu' (derived from Polynesian languages) to the Western world in the 18th century?

- A) Ferdinand Magellan
- B) Christopher Columbus
- C) James Cook**
- D) Marco Polo

5. During the Edo period in Japan, elaborate full-body tattoos known as 'irezumi' were associated with which societal group, often for reasons of beautification and as a form of punishment?

- A) Samurai warriors
- B) Imperial nobility
- C) Firefighters and laborers**
- D) Buddhist monks

6. The practice of tattooing among the indigenous peoples of the Americas often served diverse purposes. Which of the following was a common function of tattooing for many tribes?

- A) To signify mourning for lost loved ones
- B) To mark military achievements and spiritual protection**
- C) As a prerequisite for marriage ceremonies
- D) To display wealth and material possessions

7. In 19th-century Western society, where did tattooing initially gain popularity, often seen among sailors and circus performers?

- A) Upper-class salons
- B) Academic institutions
- C) Traveling exhibitions and ports**
- D) Religious institutions

8. Who is credited with developing the first electric tattoo machine in the late 19th century, significantly altering the speed and application of tattooing?

- A) Nikola Tesla
- B) Thomas Edison
- C) Samuel O'Reilly**
- D) Alexander Graham Bell

9. The term 'taboo' in English, often associated with prohibitions and customs, is derived from a Polynesian word that also relates to the practice of tattooing. Which language is it from?

- A) Hawaiian
- B) Maori**
- C) Samoan
- D) Tahitian

10. In ancient Roman society, tattoos were sometimes used as a form of punishment or to brand slaves and criminals. What was the primary material used for ink in such instances?

- A) Carbon black (soot)**
- B) Mineral pigments
- C) Plant-based dyes
- D) Metallic oxides

11. The traditional Ainu people of Japan practiced tattooing, particularly on the faces of women. What was a primary purpose of these facial tattoos?

- A) To ward off evil spirits
- B) To signify marital status and beauty**
- C) To mark passage into adulthood
- D) To indicate social hierarchy

12. During the Victorian era in Britain, tattoos were often associated with which demographic, reflecting a growing fascination with exotic cultures and maritime life?

- A) The aristocracy
- B) Working-class individuals and sailors**
- C) The clergy
- D) The scientific community

13. What ancient civilization is believed to have been one of the earliest to use tattoos for medicinal or spiritual purposes, evidenced by archaeological finds?

- A) Ancient Greece
- B) Ancient Rome
- C) Scythian culture**
- D) Norse civilization

14. The practice of tattooing in Southeast Asia, such as in Thailand and Cambodia, often involves specific designs believed to offer protection or good fortune. What is this type of tattooing commonly referred to as?

- A) Sak Yant**
- B) Batik
- C) Hena
- D) Yantra

15. In the context of early 20th-century American popular culture, tattoos became strongly associated with which type of entertainment, contributing to their visibility and mystique?

- A) Vaudeville shows
- B) The silent film industry
- C) Circus sideshows**
- D) The burgeoning jazz scene