

Cosmic Ink: A History of Celestial Tattoos

Tattoo History · Answer Key · 12 Questions

1. Which 18th-century explorer's crew documented the earliest Western encounters with Polynesian tattooing, later leading to the naming of stars like 'Beta Crucis' in celestial navigation logs?

A) James Cook

B) Ferdinand Magellan

C) Vasco da Gama

D) Christopher Columbus

2. In the context of 'space tattoos,' which specific astronomical event is famously depicted in the tattoos of members of the 'Heaven's Gate' cult, relating to the 1997 comet arrival?

A) Halley's Comet

B) Comet Hale-Bopp

C) Shoemaker-Levy 9

D) Great Comet of 1843

3. Traditional 'Old School' sailor tattoos often featured a North Star (Polaris). What was the primary maritime purpose for tattooing this specific celestial body on the skin?

A) To signal membership in the Royal Navy

B) As a navigational talisman to ensure return home

C) To mark completion of a voyage to the Arctic Circle

D) To identify the wearer as an expert navigator

4. Which celestial body, often featured in historical 'Sailor Jerry' style tattoos, was historically associated with 'reaching for the moon' as a symbol of unattainable ambition?

A) The Moon

B) Mars

C) Venus

D) Saturn

5. During the Victorian era, which astronomical motif became popular in mourning tattoos to represent the soul's journey into the 'great beyond' of the cosmos?

A) The Andromeda Galaxy

B) A stylized Sun

C) A comet with a trailing tail

D) The constellation Orion

6. What is the historical significance of the 'Planetary Symbols' often found in alchemical-inspired tattoo designs from the 17th century?

- A) They represented specific metallic properties**
- B) They served as shorthand for astrological charts
- C) They were used as navigational maps for trade routes
- D) They denoted the wearer's rank in a secret society

7. Which constellation was traditionally tattooed by sailors to signify that they had successfully navigated around Cape Horn?

- A) Southern Cross**
- B) Ursa Major
- C) Cassiopeia
- D) Pleiades

8. In ancient Mesoamerican cultures, which celestial body was frequently tattooed as a symbol of the feathered serpent deity, Quetzalcoatl?

- A) The Sun
- B) The Planet Venus**
- C) The North Star
- D) The Milky Way

9. Which space-related historical artifact inspired the aesthetic of 'Cyber-Tech' tattoos in the late 20th century, focusing on orbital mechanics and gear systems?

- A) The Antikythera Mechanism**
- B) The Voyager Golden Record
- C) The Sputnik 1 satellite
- D) The Hubble telescope mirror

10. Before modern ink, which pigment was historically used in some cultures to tattoo 'Star' motifs, chosen specifically because it contained mineral dust derived from fallen meteorites?

- A) Hematite**
- B) Charcoal
- C) Cinnabar
- D) Indigo

11. What does the 'Solar System' sleeve tattoo commonly represent in the subculture of 1970s 'Space Age' art?

- A) The desire for extraterrestrial life
- B) A dedication to the Apollo moon landing missions**
- C) The rejection of religious dogma in favor of science
- D) A fascination with the occult properties of planets

12. Which planet, when depicted in traditional 1920s tattoo flash art, was frequently shown with rings to symbolize the 'rings of time' or longevity?

- A) Jupiter
- B) Uranus
- C) Saturn**
- D) Neptune