

Ancient Rome – Legacy of Rome

The civilization of Ancient Rome had a lasting legacy on world history. Not only did Ancient Rome cover a vast amount of land at its peak, but it also existed for almost 1000 years. The legacy of Ancient Rome is still felt today in western culture in areas such as government, law, language, architecture, engineering, and religion.

Government

Many modern-day governments are modeled after the Roman Republic. Concepts such as balance of powers, veto, and representation all were developed and recorded by the Romans.

The United States has three branches of government similar to the Roman Republic. The [Executive Branch](#) (President) is similar to the elected consuls of Rome. The [Legislative Branch](#) (Congress) is similar to the Roman assemblies (like the Senate). Finally, the [Judicial Branch](#) is similar to the Praetors of Rome. The U.S. even named one house of Congress, the [Senate](#), after the Senate of Rome.

Law

Roman law had a significant influence over the modern-day laws of many countries. Legal ideas like [trial by jury](#), [civil rights](#), contracts, personal property, legal wills, and corporations all were influenced by Roman law and the Roman way of looking at things.

Language

The Latin language spoken by the Romans spread throughout much of Western Europe during the time of the Roman Empire. Many languages evolved from Latin. These languages are called the "Romance languages." They include French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Romanian. Around 800 million people around the world speak a Romance language today.

Architecture

The buildings and architecture of Ancient Rome still influences many building designs today. The neoclassical architecture movement of the 18th century was a return to many of the ideas of the Romans. You can see the influence of Roman architecture in government buildings, large banks, and even some famous buildings like the United States Capitol Building.

Engineering and Construction

The Romans changed the western world by spreading their innovations in engineering throughout the empire. They built long lasting roads that helped to increase trade and also helped their armies to quickly move about the empire. Many of these roads are still used today. The Romans were also known for their public projects. They built aqueducts to bring water into the cities for all to use. They also built public buildings like bath houses. To build many of these projects the Romans perfected concrete. Roman concrete allowed them to build strong and durable buildings at a lower cost than stone.

Christianity

The latter part of the Roman Empire had a great impact on religion in Europe through the spread of Christianity. Rome was the home of the Catholic Church which would hold great influence over Europe for the next thousand years. Today, Christianity is the largest religion in the world.

Interesting Facts About the Legacy of Ancient Rome

- The Roman alphabet is used by many languages around the world including the Romance languages and English. It was first developed by the Etruscans.
- The Renaissance was a time when the art and ideas of Ancient Rome and Greece were rediscovered after the Middle Ages.
- Roman numerals are sometimes still used today. The number of the NFL Super Bowl was written using Roman numerals up until Super Bowl 50, which is written as "50" rather than the Roman number "L."
- Latin terms are still commonly used in science, medicine, and law.
- Many words in the English language were influenced by Latin and have Latin roots.

Ancient Rome – Legacy of Rome Quiz

1) In what area of western culture has Ancient Rome had a lasting impact?

- Government
 - Law
 - Architecture
 - Language
 - All of the above
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2) Which branch of the United States government is similar to the Roman Senate?

- Legislative Branch
 - Judicial Branch
 - Executive Branch
 - All of the above
 - None of the above
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3) What position in the Roman Republic is similar to the Executive Branch of the United States?

- Senator
 - Praetor
 - Censor
 - Consul
 - Tribune
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4) What are Romance Languages?

- Languages used when writing love poems
 - Languages that evolved from Latin
 - Languages that evolved from Greek
 - Languages that use lots of romantic words
 - Languages that evolved from English
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5) Which of the following modern legal ideas was influenced by Ancient Rome?

- Trial by jury
 - Legal wills
 - Civil rights
 - Contracts
 - All of the above
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6) True or False: Latin terms are commonly used in western medicine, law, and science.

- TRUE
 - FALSE
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7) Which of the following languages is not a Romance Language?

- French
 - Spanish
 - English
 - Italian
 - Romanian
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8) What architectural movement was a return to the Roman style of architecture?

- Neoclassical
 - Georgian
 - Tudor
 - Victorian
 - Modernism
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9) What religion spread throughout much of Europe during the Roman Empire?

- Islam
 - Hinduism
 - Taoism
 - Christianity
 - Scientology
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10) Besides the Romance Languages, what other language uses the Roman alphabet?

- Arabic
- English
- Greek
- Chinese
- Japanese