

Why did Egyptians use a star clock?

The star clock contained a list of decanal stars that rise or set at the horizon sequentially, providing a reliable method for keeping time during the night. Each decan represents a ten-day week in the Egyptian calendar, allowing Egyptians to maintain an accurate record of days throughout the year.

What is Egyptian astronomy based on?

This chapter studies Egyptian astronomy based on the very few surviving texts. The Egyptian calendar was purely solar, unlike most ancient calendars. The oldest astronomical monuments from Egypt are the star clocks, mainly on the interior of coffin lids from the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties.

When did astronomy start in Egypt?

Egyptian astronomy dates back to prehistoric times. The presence of stone circles at Nabta Playa in Upper Egypt from the 5th millennium BCE show the importance of astronomy to the religious life of ancient Egypt, even in the prehistoric period.

How did ancient Egyptians use astronomy?

The ancient Egyptians used astronomy to help them navigate the Nile River, which was essential for their agriculture and transportation. Many ancient Egyptian temples and tombs were aligned with specific astronomical events, such as the rising of certain stars.

How many days are in a year in Egypt?

They divide the year into 36 ten-day intervals (decades), each with 12 stars, to mark the hours of the night for religious purposes. The major text of Egyptian astronomy is the Book of Nut, the sky goddess, which describes the behavior of the sun, moon, and especially fixed stars, as well as shadow clocks and water clocks.

What astronomical texts did ancient Egyptians use?

One of the most important Egyptian astronomical texts was the Book of Nut, going back to the Middle Kingdom or earlier. For Ancient Egyptians, the death of a king had a strong connection to the stars. They believed once a king was deceased, their soul would rise to the heavens and become a star.

The Great Pyramid of Giza. Egyptologists believe that it was built as a tomb for a 4th Dynasty Egyptian pharaoh, Khufu, in the 26th century BC. During the reign of Khufu, Thuban was the Pole Star ...

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Egyptian star clocks, also known as merkhets or shadow clocks, were ancient timekeeping devices used by the ancient Egyptians to track the movement of stars and the passage of time. These clocks were simple yet effective tools that helped the Egyptians keep track of time during the night when the sun was not visible.

The transition to the solar-based calendar brought several benefits, including more accurate measurement of time, improved alignment with agricultural and religious practices, and enhanced stability and reliability in the timekeeping ...

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Symons SL (2007) A star's year: the annual cycle in the ancient Egyptian sky. In: Steele JM (ed) Calendars and years: astronomy and time in the ancient world. Oxbow Books, Oxford, pp 429-446. Google Scholar
Symons SL (in press) Contexts and elements of decanal star lists in ancient Egypt.

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