

ROMAN NUMERALS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE!

Bill's World-Class English Class Conversation Kickstarter #28 (Version 1.1)



(Credit: [JurgenG](#))

Let's talk about that other set of numerals used in English, the Roman numbers!

I. It All Started In Rome



(Credit: [WarpFlyght](#))

The ancient Romans developed not just an empire, but a distinct culture that lasted well over a thousand years. The Roman legacy continues to influence the world today, and there's no better symbolism than their numerals!

1. Does your own culture also use Roman numerals (I, II, etc.) in addition to Arabic (1, 2, etc.)? Widely?
2. The [majority of English vocabulary has Latin origins](#). Can you [name at least a few of these words](#)?

II. By The Numbers

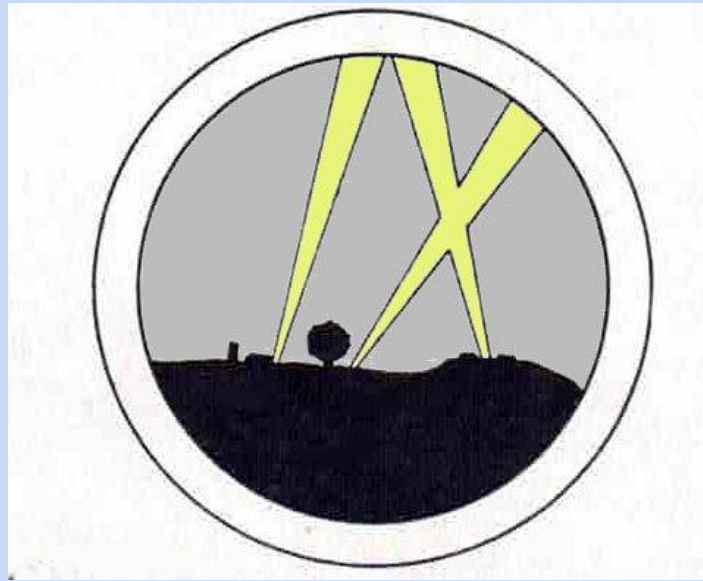
Roman	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII		L	C	D	M
Arabic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	...	50	100	500	1,000

The numbers in the top row are Roman, and the numbers in the bottom row are Arabic in origin. The bottom numbers are called “Arabic” because they [arrived in Europe via the Arab world](#), before going global.

1. Do you know how to pronounce the top numbers? What about the bottom digits?

2. The top background color in the above chart is Tyrian purple. Do you know [this shade’s significance](#)?

III. Addition And Subtraction



(Credit: [Soundofmusicals](#))

Addition using Roman numerals is fairly simple, with the smaller number added to the right of the larger number (e.g., VI = 6). Subtraction works in a similar fashion, with the smaller number on the left (e.g., IV = 4).

1. Do you know what the above number in the picture is? Can you guess [what's creating the light beams](#)?
2. The inadequacy of Roman numerals becomes obvious when one tries to use them for any other kind of math, [such as multiplication](#). Are you surprised that Arabic numerals have basically become universal?

IV. The Romans Would've Been Proud ...



The use of Roman numerals has led to all kinds of confusion and humor, even in the modern era. The 40th Super Bowl happened to be [the “Extra Large” superbowl](#), to the delight of American football fans worldwide.

1. Which two teams played in Super Bowl XL? Which team was favored, and by how many points?
2. [NPR](#) and [PBS](#) were attempts to recreate [the BBC](#)’s success. Why do you think they’re not as popular?

V. *Animal House* - Toga! Toga! Toga! Toga!



***Animal House* - Toga! Toga! Toga! Toga!**

1. Do you know who held the first toga party? Are you [sitting down](#), especially if you know [your history](#)?
2. Fraternities and sororities are [part of a long tradition](#). Does your country have similar organizations?

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