



## Ancient Sumer

**Mesopotamia** is the region between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers where some of the earliest civilizations began. Sumer was the first civilization in Mesopotamia. It began around 4500 BC.

### Sumerian Cities

Sumer was made up of many city-states, each with its own king or queen. Cities were built near the rivers for water and fertile soil. Public buildings and temples were built in the center of each city. Houses were made out of mudbricks.

### Sumerian Inventions

Sumerians invented **cuneiform**, a writing system using wedge-shaped symbols. They also invented the wheel, the plow, and irrigation systems to help with farming. Sumerians were the first people to use astronomy to track time and predict the constellations.

## Pharaohs Rule Egypt

**Pharaohs were the powerful rulers** of Ancient Egypt. Egyptians believed pharaohs were chosen by the gods to rule. The most famous **pharaoh** is **Tutankhamun**, who ruled for about 10 years.

### Inventions

Ancient Egyptians improved on inventions from earlier civilizations and created many new ones. They invented clocks and calendars to keep track of time. They made **papyrus** paper from reeds growing along the Nile River to write on. The **shaduf** was a tool they invented to help move water to their crops. It used a lever to lift a bucket of water from the river to higher ground.

### Cities

Two of the largest ancient Egyptian cities were Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Archaeologists have uncovered evidence that these cities were well planned. They had a **citadel** (a fortress), marketplace, granary (a storehouse for grain), workshops, and a sewage system. Houses were built from mudbricks and some even had toilets and baths!

### Food and Farming

The ancient Egyptians grew crops in the **fertile soil** along the Nile River. Their most important crops were wheat and barley, which they used to make bread, porridge, and beer. They also grew vegetables, fruits, and flax, which they used to make linen cloth.

# Ancient Civilizations

