

The Ancient Egyptian Number System

The Egyptian number system used symbols to represent numbers. There wasn't a symbol for every single number. Their number system looked like this:

	1	A simple notch, line or stroke
	10	Arch, or yoke
	100	Coil of rope
	1,000	Lotus flower
	10,000	Finger
	100,000	Tadpole or frog
	1,000,000	Egyptian God

They didn't have a symbol for the number 9, so if they wanted to write down the number 9, they wrote the symbol for number one 9 times. If they wanted to write down 40, they would write the symbol for 10 (the arch), four times.

It didn't matter what order they wrote the symbols in. In the number system we use today, 71 and 17, for example, are two different numbers, but in the Egyptian number system,

 and  both mean 112.