



## Zero – Abstract GD Topic

### Description

Zero as a concept has been around since ancient times, popping up in Babylonian and Mayan inscriptions, when it was used to calculate the passage of the seasons. In today's world, zero plays a big role unknowingly. Some of the uses are listed below.

#### Zero in Math:

- The number 0 fulfils a central role in mathematics as the additive identity of the integers, real numbers, and many other algebraic structures.
- As a digit, 0 is used as a placeholder in place value systems.
- Names for the number 0 in English include 'zero', 'nought' in the UK, 'nought' in the US, 'nil', or—in contexts where at least one adjacent digit distinguishes it from the letter "O"—oh or o.
- With zero, the entire number system came into play. From there, we get the origin of the entire branch called 'mathematics'.

Hence, without the number 0, mathematics would never stand as strong as it is today. And as we all know, math includes the invention of all the engineered tools and modern devices to date.

#### Zero in computers:

- A computer is made to understand two digits- 1 and 0. For computers, 1 represents 'True' and 0 represents 'False'. Using the combinations of multiple 1s and 0s, the empire of computers is established.
- Computer programming allows us to work on computers and carry out our day-to-day jobs efficiently. This programming uses a 'Zero-based numbering' system.
- Zero-based numbering or index origin = 0 is a way of numbering in which the initial element of a sequence is assigned the index 0, rather than the index 1 as is typical in everyday non-mathematical or non-programming circumstances.
- Martin Richards, creator of the BCPL language (a precursor of C), designed arrays initiating at 0 as the natural position to start accessing the array

contents in the language.

- 'Zero client', also known as an ultrathin client, is a server-based computing model in which the end user's computing device has no local storage. A zero client can be contrasted with a thin client, which retains the operating system and each device's specific configuration settings in flash memory.
- With the use of zero in such minimal places, development and advancement have taken a huge step. From simple program codes to artificial intelligence, zero has constantly played a major role.

Zero in computers thus serves as one of the major bases for the devices, automation and advancement that we cherish now.

### **Zero in science:**

- The zeroth law of thermodynamics was formulated after the first, second, and third laws, but considered more fundamental, thus its name.
- In biology, an organism is said to have zero-order intentionality if it shows "no intention of anything at all". This would include a situation where the organism's genetically predetermined phenotype results in a fitness benefit to itself because it did not "intend" to express its genes.
- In genomics, both 0-based and 1-based systems are used for genome coordinates.

It is evident that zero is equally important in the field of science as it is in other fields. Science is the key towards advancement and zero plays a major part in that.

### **Zero in ancient times:**

- A black dot on a third-century Indian manuscript has been identified by Oxford University as the first recorded use of the mathematical symbol for zero, 500 years earlier than previously thought, according to an Agence France-Presse article.
- The origin of the modern decimal-based place value notation can be traced to the Aryabhatiya. The concept of zero as a digit in the decimal place value notation was developed in India, presumably as early as during the Gupta period (c. 5th century), with the oldest evidence dating to the 7th century.
- The rules governing the use of zero appeared for the first time in Brahmagupta's Brahmasputha Siddhanta (7<sup>th</sup> century).

Hence, the invention of zero has its roots back in ancient times. People have kept developing since then and thus zero has a strong place in the civilization process.

### **Zero in other aspects:**

- Year zero is a year used in some calendar systems like astronomical year numbering where it coincides with the Georgian year 1 BC. Buddhist and Hindu calendars also have the year zero concepts.
- Some universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, have "week 0" or "noughth week". This

refers to the week before the first week of lectures in a term.

- The United States Air Force starts basic training each Wednesday. The first week is considered to begin with the following Sunday. The four days before that Sunday are often referred to as “Zero Week”.
- 0 is also used in 24-hour clocks and the international standards ISO 8601. This denotes the beginning of the day.
- Zero is sometimes used in street addresses, especially in schemes where even numbers are on one side of the street and odd numbers on the other. For example, Massachusetts’s Harvard Square has the address of 0 Garden Street.
- Zero is also interpreted as void or negligible, point of origin on a scale and zero point.

### **Conclusion:**

Zero lies at the heart of science, engineering and mathematics. Life without zero thus seems to be incomplete.

### **Your Turn...**

What are your thoughts on the ‘Zero’ abstract topic? Express your point of view through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

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