

The Hindu-Arabic Counting System

A long time ago, people used to draw pictures to show how many they had counted. If a farmer wanted to show how many beans he was going to plant, he would draw a picture of a bean for each bean that he had, like this..... or he would tally, like this.....

However, if a farmer had a lot of beans to count...it would take a LONG time to draw them all! So people tried to invent better ways of recording' how many' when they counted.

Eventually, some people in India invented a system called the 'Hindu Arabic Counting System' where they bundled together groups of 10, 100 and 1000 as they counted, then used the numerals or symbols from 0 to 9 to record how many groups they had.

So if a family wanted to count their beans, this is how they would do it....(use place value mat and snap lock bags to group 106 beans into bags of 10s, then 10 tens into a 100 bag, then 6 ones.)

Many countries in the world, including Australia, now use the same system to record how many they have counted. Let's use it so see how many (pencils) we have....