

Name _____

Ancient History Sourcebook: The Twelve Tables

Directions: The following laws were included in the Roman Twelve Tables.

- _____ 1. If anyone summons a man before the magistrate, he must go. If the man summoned does not go, let the one summoning him call the bystanders to witness and then take him by force.
- _____ 2. If illness or old age is the hindrance, let the summoner provide a team. He need not provide a covered carriage with a pallet unless he chooses.
- _____ 3. He whose witness has failed to appear may summon him by loud calls before his house every third day.
- _____ 4. A dreadfully deformed child shall be quickly killed.
- _____ 5. If a father sell his son three times, the son shall be free from his father.
- _____ 6. A child born after ten months since the father's death will not be admitted into a legal inheritance.
- _____ 7. Females should remain in guardianship even when they have attained their majority.
- _____ 8. A beam that is built into a house or a vineyard trellis one may not take from its place.
- _____ 9. Any woman who does not wish to be subjected in this manner to the hand of her husband should be absent three nights in succession every year, and so interrupt the usucapio of each year.
- _____ 10. Let them keep the road in order. If they have not paved it, a man may drive his team where he likes.
- _____ 11. Should a tree on a neighbor's farm be bent crooked by the wind and lean over your farm, you may take legal action for removal of that tree.
- _____ 12. A man might gather up fruit that was falling down onto another man's farm.
- _____ 13. If one has maimed a limb and does not compromise with the injured person, let there be retaliation.
- _____ 14. If one shall permit himself to be summoned as a witness, or has been a weigher, if he does not give his testimony, let him be noted as dishonest and incapable of acting again as witness.
- _____ 15. Any person who destroys by burning any building or heap of corn deposited alongside a house shall be bound, scourged and put to death by burning at the stake provided that he has committed the said misdeed with malice aforethought; but if he shall have committed it by accident, that is, by negligence, it is ordained that he repair the damage or, if he be too poor to be competent for such punishment, he shall receive a lighter punishment.
- _____ 16. If a theft has been done by night, if the owner kills the thief, the thief shall be held to be lawfully killed.
- _____ 17. A person who had been found guilty of giving false witness shall be hurled down from the Tarpeian Rock.
- _____ 18. No person shall hold meetings by night in the city.
- _____ 19. The penalty shall be capital for a judge or arbiter legally appointed who has been found guilty of receiving a bribe for giving a decision.
- _____ 20. None is to bury or burn a corpse in the city.
- _____ 21. Marriages should not take place between patricians and plebians.