

Eb'

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Eb'

Twelfth of the twenty. Yucatec **Eb'**; K'iche' **E**. The Classic sign is a head variant, often drawn with a fleshless or grinning jaw and a distinctive element above the brow. Its meaning is among the least settled in the inventory: *tooth*, *staircase*, *dew* or *mist*, and *grass* have all been proposed, none has won, and the site's tooltip takes the reading current in the highlands — **the road of destiny**. Direction south, colour yellow.

The road reading comes from K'iche' *E*, "path". The Aztec cognate at this position is **Malinalli**, twisted grass, whose patron is Patecatl, and the twisting of grass into cord is not far from the twisting of a path across a hillside — but the connection is suggestive, not demonstrated.

Religion and daykeeping

In **living highland practice**, E is the road, and the road means both the physical journey and the course of a life. Ethnographic accounts and Guatemalan Maya organisations describe it as the day for travel and travellers, for merchants and for anyone setting out; for guidance and for guides; and for asking what a person's path is — which is a question daykeepers are asked about children in particular. An *ajq'ij* born on E is spoken of as a guide, someone others follow or consult before deciding, with a tendency to be always in motion. Petitions for safe passage and for direction are among the most common made on it. Which shrine and which words belong to the apprenticeship, not to a public page, and communities differ.

E is one of the four **year bearers**, the *Mam*, in the Guatemalan highlands today — with Kej, No'j and Iq'. Because 365 leaves a remainder of five on division by twenty, the four bearers must stand five apart in the list, and E does: Ik' at 2, Manik' at 7, Eb' at 12, Kab'an at 17. Landa's sixteenth-century Yucatec set was a different one, K'an, Muluk, Ix and Kawak, and a third set of Ak'b'al, Lamat, B'en and Etz'nab' is attested too. Which set applies is a question of place and period, not of one community being right.

In the **Classic and Postclassic record**, roads matter concretely: the *sakb'e*, the raised white causeways, connected lowland centres and are described in Yucatec sources as roads in the fullest sense, ceremonial as well as practical. The **Dresden** and **Madrid** codices carry Eb' as a station in their 260-day almanacs; the Madrid's working almanacs for farming, hunting and beekeeping are the best surviving picture of how such stations were used. The colonial **Books of Chilam Balam** list the twenty days with brief auguries and trades — a colonial-era source in a borrowed format, and a third kind of evidence again beside Classic epigraphy and contemporary daykeeping.

The Zapotec *piyè* and the Mixtec codices hold the same position, conventionally glossed Grass.

Key dates

Date	Event
c. 600–500 BCE (<i>contested</i>)	Earliest 260-day count glyphs, Oaxaca — San José Mogote and Monte Albán. Zapotec, not Maya.
36 / 32 BCE	Chiapa de Corzo Stela 2 and Tres Zapotes Stela C, the earliest dated Long Counts. Both partly reconstructed.
c. 250–900 CE	Classic period: day signs in cartouches; <i>sakb'e</i> causeways link the lowland centres.
11th–12th c. CE (<i>debated</i>)	The surviving Dresden Codex copy, with its 260-day almanacs.
1562 / 1566	Landa burns the books at Maní, then records the twenty day names in his <i>Relación</i> .
1905–1935	The Goodman–Martínez–Thompson correlation, constant 584283. Mainstream, not unanimous.
11 Aug 3114 BCE	Long Count zero under GMT 584283 (6 Sep 3114 BCE Julian); the 584285 variant gives 13 August.
21 Dec 2012	13.0.0.0.0, 4 Ajaw 3 K'ank'in — the anchor this site counts from.
1995 / 1996	Guatemala's Peace Accords recognise Maya spirituality and access to sacred places.

In the count

Eb' returns **every twenty days**, and because twenty leaves seven on division by thirteen its coefficient rises by seven each time: 7, 1, 8, 2, 9, 3, 10, 4, 11, 5, 12, 6, 13. Thirteen appearances take **260 days** and use each number once.

Upcoming in 2026, on the site's GMT anchor: **22 August (4 Eb')**, **11 September (11 Eb')**, **1 October (5 Eb')**.

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