

The Start of Rome

This text is adapted from an original work of the Core Knowledge Foundation.



Rome became an important city on the banks of the Tiber River.

Two thousand years ago, Rome was the center of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was one of the world's greatest empires. The Romans ruled all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea.

But how did Rome begin? Rome probably began when some farmers and shepherds built a village of small huts on one of the seven hills near the Tiber River. These people probably settled by the Tiber because it was a good place to live. The soil was rich. There was plenty of water, and the river was good for travel. An island in the river near the village made crossing the river easier.

The seven hills around the Tiber made it hard for enemies to attack. Rome grew as more people settled on those hills. That is why Rome became

known as the "City of Seven Hills."

According to legend, Rome was founded in 753 BCE. The letters BCE stand for "Before the Common Era." The Common Era began in year 0. That means Rome is more than 2,750 years old.

For many years, kings ruled Rome. Over time the kings became greedy for power. In 509 BCE the Romans drove out their king. They decided not to trust anyone else to be king. Instead, the Romans made their city a republic. In a republic, people choose representatives to rule for them.

Roman Lands, About 130 BCE



Over time, Rome came to control a large area around the Mediterranean Sea.

“The Start of Rome” Questions

Answer these questions from the article. Be sure to start your sentences with an uppercase letter and end with a period.

1. Where did the Romans rule two thousand years ago?

2. How did Rome begin?
 - A. Some leaders decided to make a country
 - B. Some farmers and shepherds build a village of small huts near the Tiber River
 - C. Some farmers and shepherds wanted to find a place to have a party

3. Why did ancient Romans build their huts near a river?

4. How old is Rome?

Answer Key for Parents

1. Romans ruled all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea.
2. B-some farmers and shepherds built a village of small huts near the Tiber River
3. (answers will vary) The soil was rich. There was plenty of water. The river was good for travel.
4. Rome is more than 2,750 years old.