

# 草书 : cǎoshū

莫琦

# 草书 Meaning

- Simplified Chinese: 草书
- Traditional Chinese: 草書
- Etymology:
  - 草 (cǎo): grass, quick, rough
  - 书 (shū): book, to write
- Misnomer:
  - Many people think 草书 = grass script
  - Original meaning = rough/draft script

# What is 草书?

- Cursive variant of clerical and regular script
- Style  $\neq$  script
  - Doesn't follow strict/discernable rules
  - More artistic
- More expressive than traditional calligraphy
- Shorthand, personal notes, drafts, artwork

# Origins and Evolution of 草书

- Originated in China during Han Dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE)
- Biggest growth during Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE)
- 章草 (zhāngcǎo): developed as a quick way to write clerical script
- Modern cursive: 章草 + semi-cursive style + standard style

# Styles and Variations of 草书

- 章草 (zhāngcǎo)
- Modern cursive
- 狂草 (kuángcǎo):
  - 狂 (kuáng): wild, mad
- 独草 (dúcǎo): unconnected style
  - 独 (dú): single, independent
- 连绵 (liánmián): connected style
  - 连 (lián): to link, to join
  - 绵 (mián): continuous

## Rules of 草书

- Not governed by rules/style guidelines like other forms of calligraphy
- Most important element is stroke order and energy flow
- Stroke order may be the only way to recognize characters written in 草书

# Uses of 草书

- Originally used as shorthand for clerical script
- Illegibility detracts from usefulness as means of communication
- Regarded as ultimate artistic form

# Works Cited

<https://www.asianbrushpainter.com/blogs/kb/the-cursive-style>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cursive\\_script\\_\(East\\_Asia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cursive_script_(East_Asia))

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