

2020 Virtual Staked Plains Roundup

Cattle Branding

Why do ranchers brand their livestock?

Livestock are branded for identification and ownership purposes. Around 3,000 years ago the ancient Egyptians marked their livestock with fire-heated brands. In the 1500's the Spanish settlers brought the custom to the Americas.

How are branding irons heated?

Traditionally, cowboys would dig a pit into which they would place dry wood. They would build the fire and let it burn until only a bed of red-hot coals remained. The branding irons are placed into the hot coals not into an open flame. A more modern method is to use propane fuel and a burner placed into a steel pipe.

How do you read a brand?

There are three rules: 1. Read left to right. 2. Read from top to bottom 3. Read from the outside in.

How do you create a brand?

Brands are made up of *symbols*, *number*, and *letters* and are registered by their owner with their state Brand Board. They are usually simple designs that signify the cattle's owner or the owner's ranch.

- A half circle on the bottom is **rocking**
- A letter or a number on its side is called **lazy**
- Read top to bottom



rocking H



lazy nine



Bar S

- A shape around a letter, number or shape is **the name - read outside then inside.**
- Letters sharing a part are **connected**



box T



circle diamond

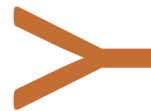


Can you read these brands?

Write your answer in the space below the brand.



1.



2.

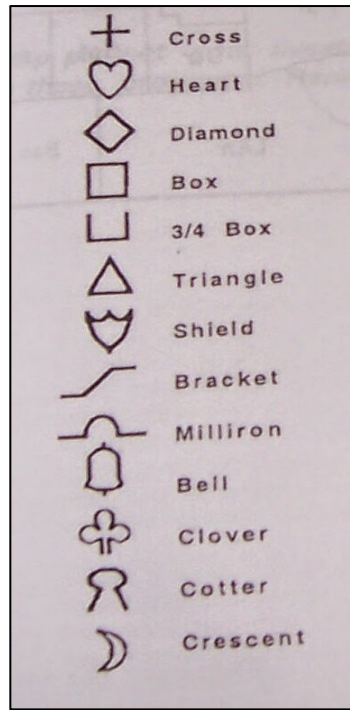
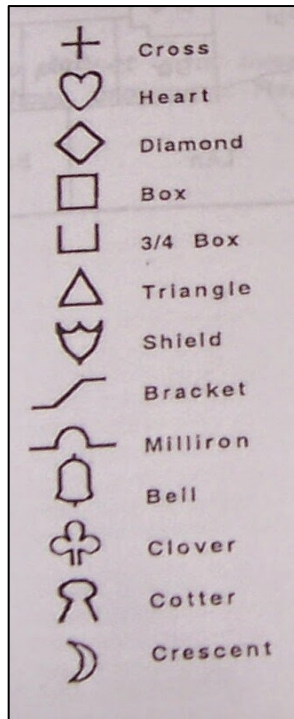
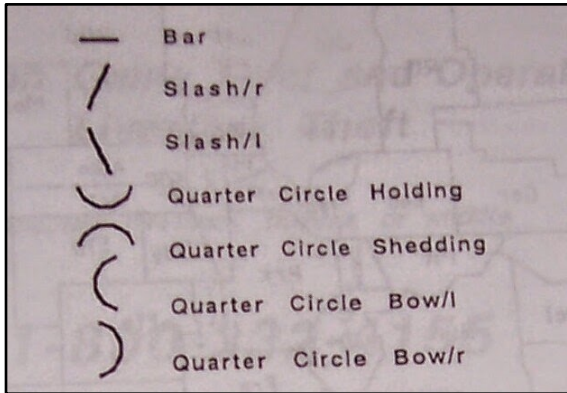


Design Your Own Brand

In the space below design and name your brand

Brand Name _____

Special Symbols
 You can use LETTERS, NUMBERS or SPECIAL SYMBOLS to design your brand.



SOURCE: Stamp, Jimmy. *Decoding the Range: The secret Language of Cattle Branding*. 30 Apr. 2013, www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/decoding-the-range-the-secret-language-of-cattle-branding-45246620/.

Answer Key: 1. Barbecue 2. Lazy Y

