

# The Stone Age

**History** is the study of the past, in particular the changes over time that have occurred within human society.

Prehistory in Britain started c750,000 BC, when several species of humans arrived from Europe. Prehistory is divided into three main periods, the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. Each period is named after the main material used to make tools at that time.

Stone Age			Bronze Age	Iron Age
<b>Palaeolithic</b> c750,000–c10,000 BC Duration: 740,000 years	<b>Mesolithic</b> c10,000–c4000 BC Duration: 6000 years	<b>Neolithic</b> c4000–c2500 BC Duration: 1500 years	c2500–c800 BC Duration: 1700 years	c800 BC–AD 43 Duration: 843 years

**Tools and weapons** – Tools were made from stone, wood and bone. They were used for digging, hunting and chopping.

**Everyday life** – Stone Age people were hunter-gatherers. They followed and killed animals and gathered seasonal food. They made clothes from animal skins and created cave art.

**Settlements** – People lived in temporary shelters or caves in the Palaeolithic. People lived in more permanent settlements in the Neolithic.



**Beliefs** – People built monuments, including stone circles, henges and earthworks. Historians believe that they used these monuments for gatherings and worship.

**End of the Stone Age** – The Beaker folk arrived from Europe and brought their knowledge of metalworking to Britain.

## Definitions of time

**BC and AD** - The birth of Jesus Christ separates time into two eras, BC, before Christ, and AD, after Christ was born.

**BCE and CE** - Sometimes, BC and AD are replaced by BCE and CE. BCE stands for 'before common era' and CE stands for 'common era'. Therefore, 1 BC is the same as 1 BCE and AD 1 is the same as 1 CE.

**era** - An era is a period of history that begins with a significant event. The birth of Jesus Christ was a significant event that started a new era.

**millennium** - A millennium is 1000 years. The first millennium AD was AD 1–AD 1000. The first millennium BC was 1000 BC–1 BC

**prehistory** - Prehistory is the time before written records were created. In Britain, prehistory ended in AD 43, when the Romans invaded.

**prehistoric** - The word prehistoric relates to any object, animal, person or place that existed before written records began.

## Glossary

**archaeologist** - Someone who studies artefacts from the past.

**artefact** - An object made by a person that is of historical interest.

**circa** - Abbreviated to 'c' and used before a date to show that the date is approximate. For example c2500 BC.

**hillfort** - A settlement built on a hill that is protected by ditches and fences. stone circle A circular arrangement of standing stones.

**Skara Brae** - is a Neolithic settlement in the Orkney Islands, Scotland. It has well preserved, interconnected houses made of stone.

**Stonehenge** - is a stone circle in Wiltshire, England. It is made of stones from the local area and Wales. The stones line up with the Sun during midsummer and midwinter.

