

Prehistoric Britain

The Stone Age was a very long period of time when humans used stone to make tools. It covers a huge period of time - over 3 million years. It can be broken down into 3 smaller time periods:



Palaeolithic - around 3,000,000 BC.
Early humans used simple stone tools with sharp edges.



Mesolithic - around 10,000 BC.
Humans were **hunter-gatherers** and constantly on the move in order to stay safe and warm.



Neolithic - around 4500-2400 BC.
Farming developed and villages were built.



Weapons such as stone axes, spears, bows and arrows were used to hunt for food.

What did the Stone Age people have to do?

hunt and gather food

find water and shelter

skin animals and make clothes

collect firewood for making fires to cook on and keep warm

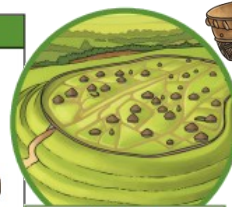
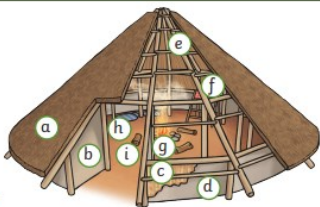
make tools and weapons



After the Stone Age, people in Britain began to discover and use new metals. During the **Bronze Age**, people learned to make tools and weapons from bronze, a strong metal made by mixing copper and tin. Later, during the **Iron Age**, people learned to make tools and weapons from iron. People lived in villages, farmed the land and built forts to protect themselves.

Roundhouses

- thick thatch
- door
- wattle
- daud
- timber frame
- upright loom
- hearth (fire)
- beds
- logs for sitting on



An Iron Age hillfort



Timeline

5000 BC

AD 500

Stone Age

Bronze Age

Iron Age

Ancient Egypt

Roman Britain
AD1

BC Used to show that a date is before the year AD 1. This is counted backwards, so 200 BC is before 100 BC.

AD Used to show that a date is after the year AD 1. This is counted forwards, so AD 100 is before AD 200.

Archaeologists have been able to work out lots about what life was like in Prehistoric Britain, using evidence from artwork, artefacts, monuments and also from animal and human remains.

Key vocabulary:

agriculture : Growing crops and keeping animals for food and materials (farming).

archaeologist: A person who studies the past by digging up historical places and studying objects.

hunter-gatherer : Someone who hunts animals and gathers wild food to eat, moving from place to place.

monument : A building or structure which is important for learning about the past.

prehistoric : Before written records began.

settlement: A place where people live together in a community.

tribe: A community of people, ruled by a leader, with shared traditions, ancestors and culture.

alloy: A metal made by combining two or more metals to improve its properties.

bronze: A metal alloy made from copper and tin. Much harder and more long lasting than stone or copper.

iron: A metal that is stronger and harder than bronze.

Hillforts

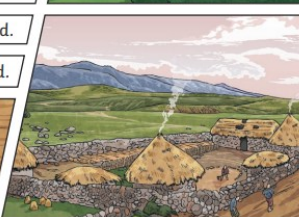
The Iron Age people lived in farming communities in **hillforts**. These **hillforts** allowed hundreds of people to live together in a village where they could live off the land.

Crops such as barley, oats and wheat were grown.

Cows, pigs, goats and sheep were farmed for milk, meat and wool.

Deer, wild boar and fish were hunted.

Berries, nuts and plants were gathered.



Weapons

- Daggers, blades, spearheads, chisels, axes and armour could all now be made out of **bronze** which was harder and more durable than stone.

