

# The Stone Age

The Stone Age covers a period of over 3 million years and started when the first human-like animals came into existence. These early humans first arrived in Britain more than 800,000 years ago.

## When Was the Stone Age?

The Stone Age is split into three time periods:

- Palaeolithic – around 3,000,000BC  
The earliest **hominids** used simple tools. Britain was connected by land to France and Denmark.
- Mesolithic – around 10,000BC  
People led **nomadic** lives as hunter-gatherers. Britain became an island.
- Neolithic – around 4500BC to 2400BC  
Farming began, pottery was developed and villages were built.



## Why Is It Called the Stone Age?

During this time, stone was the main material used to make tools and weapons with a sharp edge or point.

## Where Did Stone Age People Live?

### Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Eras

Early Stone Age people were nomadic and some lived in caves. Evidence of humans sheltering in caves has been found by archaeologists, who discovered cave paintings of ancient animals.

However, most Stone Age people are thought to have lived in tents made with wood or animal bones and animal skins. There is evidence that the floor was covered with a layer of moss, reeds and other soft plant materials.

### Neolithic Era

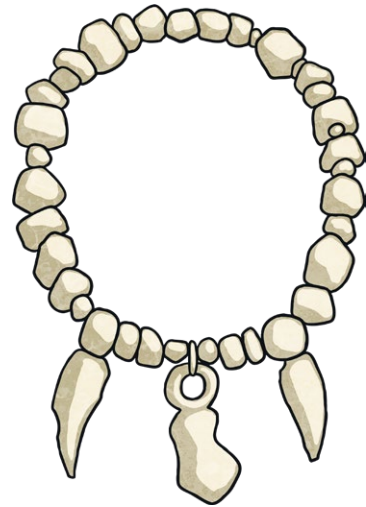
Stone Age people stopped travelling and began to settle in villages. There is evidence of settlements made up of simple roundhouses built from stone. They were built into mounds of rubbish known as midden, which would provide stability and warmth. These houses had beds, storage shelves and a hearth in the middle.

### What Did Stone Age People Eat?

Stone Age people were initially hunter-gatherers, eating nuts, berries and fruits that they gathered and meat and fish that they hunted.

Animals, such as mammoths, were much bigger during this time so hunting them would have been hard work but they would provide enough food for a village.

During the Neolithic era, Stone Age people became farmers, which meant that they grew much of the food they needed for their village.



### What Did Stone Age People Wear?

Due to changing weather, Stone Age clothing had to keep people warm. After animals were hunted, their skins would be removed before the meat was eaten. These would be cleaned using stone tools and then washed. There is evidence that needles and thread were invented during the Stone Age.

Men, women and children wore similar clothing:

- a tunic made from two pieces of rectangular animal skin bound (or later sewn) together with a hole for the head;
- a belt possibly made from grasses;
- simple leather **moccasin** shoes;
- jewellery might be added for decoration.

### Glossary

**hearth:** Fireplace.

**hominids:** Humans or close relatives of humans.

**moccasin:** A soft leather slipper or shoe with the sole turned up on all sides and sewn at the top in a simple gathered seam.

**nomadic:** Travelling from place to place with no permanent home.

# Questions

1. Which of these was **not** a food of Stone Age people? Tick **one**.

- nuts
- berries
- fish
- cheese

2. Number these Stone Age terms to show the order they appear in the text. The first one has been done for you.

	moccasins
<b>1</b>	hominid
	cave paintings
	nomadic
	hearth

3. Which of these words means fireplace? Tick **one**.

- hearth
- hominid
- moccasin
- nomadic

4. Join the boxes to link each time period to the correct fact.

Palaeolithic

Britain became an island

Mesolithic

Britain was connected by land to France and Denmark

Neolithic

roundhouse

5. Find and copy **two** things that Stone Age people would have eaten.

- .
- .

6. Find and copy the material that Stone Age shoes would have been made from.

# Questions

7. Give one reason why you would have liked to have lived during the Stone Age and one reason why you would **not** have liked to have lived during the Stone Age.

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8. Stone Age people stopped travelling and began to settle in villages.

Why do you think that this was the case?

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# Answers

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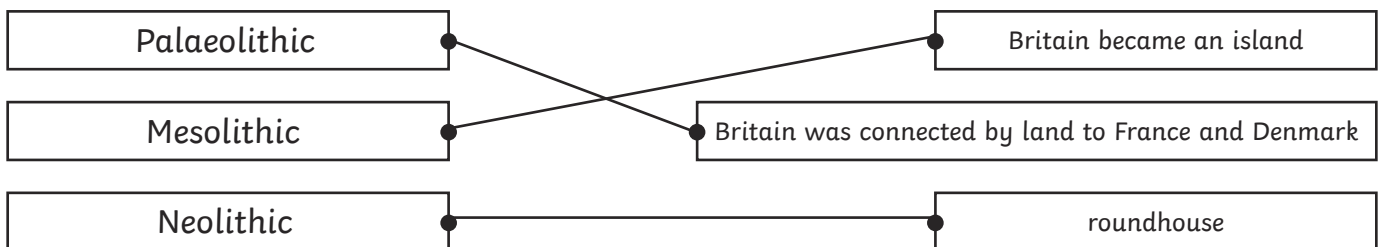
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<b>5</b>	moccasins
<b>1</b>	hominid
<b>3</b>	cave paintings
<b>2</b>	nomadic
<b>4</b>	hearth

3. Which of these words means fireplace? Tick **one**.

- hearth**
- hominid
- moccasin
- nomadic

4. Join the boxes to link each time period to the correct fact.



5. Find and copy **two** things that Stone Age people would have eaten.

**Accept any two of the following: nuts; berries; fruits; meat; fish.**

# Answers

6. Find and copy the material that Stone Age shoes would have been made from.

**leather**

7. Give one reason why you would have liked to have lived during the Stone Age and one reason why you would not have liked to have lived during the Stone Age.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I would have enjoyed hunting for food with handmade tools but I would not have liked eating the food – I would miss pizza!**

8. Stone Age people stopped travelling and began to settle in villages.

Why do you think that this was the case?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: People realised they could farm so no longer had to travel to find food. They probably wanted to settle down with their families and to make friends.**