

## Timeline

*All dates shown below are approximate.*

**800,000 BC** Earliest footprints in Britain

**400,000 BC** Earliest hearth in Britain

**10,000 BC** End of the last Ice Age

**6000 BC** Land bridge to Europe flooded

**4000 BC** Adoption of agriculture

**3000 BC** Stonehenge started **3000 BC** Skara Brae built

**2300 BC** Bronze working introduced

**1600 BC** Stonehenge abandoned

**1200 BC** First hillforts

**800 BCE** Ironworking introduced

**120 BC** Coins introduced from Europe

**54 BC** First Roman invasion (Julius Caesar)

**AD 43** Second Roman invasion (Claudius)

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Chronology** - The arrangement of dates or events in the order in which they occurred.

**BC** - Before Christ. A way of dating years before the birth of Jesus.

The bigger the number BC, the longer ago in history it was.

**AD Anno Domini** - "in the year of our Lord". AD is used to show dates after the birth of Jesus. This year is AD 2018.

**Archaeology** - The study of the buildings, graves, tools and other objects that belonged to people who lived in the past, in order to learn about their culture and society.

**Historical evidence** - Anything left over from the past is a source of evidence.

**Hunter-gatherers** - People who found food from their local environment and then moved from site to site depending on the season. They moved wherever they needed to get food from.

**Farmers** - The Neolithic or new Stone Age saw the beginnings of agriculture. Animals such as the cow and sheep were domesticated and provided a ready supply of meat, milk, wool, leather and bone. Grain was the first food that could be stored for long periods of time

The period of prehistory in Britain generally refers to the time before written records began. It begins when the earliest hunter-gatherers came to Britain from Europe around 450,000 BC and ends with the invasion of the Romans in AD 43. The Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age covers 98% of human history in Britain. The evolution of humans from the earliest hominins to Homo sapiens occurred in this period. Some of the major advances in technology were achieved during this period, including the control of fire, agriculture, metalworking and the wheel.



### STONE AGE

Palaeolithic to 10,000 BC

Mesolithic to 4000 BC

Neolithic to 2300 BC

### BRONZE AGE

2300 BC to 800 BC

### IRON AGE

800 BC to AD 43

## The Stone Age

The term 'Stone Age' refers to a very long period of time that we can break up into three sections.

In the early Stone Age, which we call the Paleolithic, people were hunters and they found food by roaming from place to place in different seasons.

The middle Stone Age, called the Mesolithic, began at a time when sea levels rose and Britain became an island (before this time Britain was joined to the mainland of Europe). During the Mesolithic period, tools were developed to become smaller and finer. The invention of canoes meant that people were better able to hunt for fish as well as animals.

In the late Stone Age, which is called the Neolithic, the way people lived changed a lot because they began to settle into farming villages instead of moving from place to place. People started to look after animals and grow their own crops.

## The Bronze Age

When people discovered how to get metals out of rocks, a metal called bronze replaced stone as the best material for making tools. Bronze was made using a special process called 'smelting'. People were able to build better farming equipment and they also began to make bronze weapons and jewellery. When people died, they were buried with their most important possessions. Many of these burial objects have now been discovered and they help historians to know more about what life was like during the Bronze Age.

## The Iron Age

In the Iron Age, a metal called iron replaced bronze as the main material for making tools and weapons. People lived in tribes and they were often at war with each other. Because of all of the wars, Iron Age people began to protect themselves by settling in hillforts, which were groups of round houses and farming land protected by stone walls. Sometimes people from the Iron Age are called 'Celts'. This period of history ended when the Romans invaded Britain in AD 43.

Stonehenge



Skara Brae



Stone Age tools

