

The Stone Age

The Stone Age covers a span of over 3 million years! It 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 people used simple tools.
- Mesolithic – around 10,000BC
People lived as hunter-gatherers, constantly on the move to survive.
- Neolithic – around 4500BC to 2400BC
Farming began, pottery was made 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

Some early Stone Age people 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, such as the one at Skara Brae, often made up of simple roundhouses built from stone. These houses had beds, storage shelves and a fireplace in the middle.

What Did Stone Age People Eat?

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

Animals were much bigger during this time so hunting them would have been hard work. They would, however, provide enough food for a village.

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

What Did Stone Age People Wear?

After animals were hunted, their skins would be removed before the meat was eaten. These would be cleaned using stone tools and then washed.

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 shoes;
- jewellery might be added for decoration.



Questions

1. Which of these did Stone Age people wear? Tick **two**.

- ☐ a tunic
- ☐ a hat
- ☐ a belt
- ☐ a skirt

2. Join the boxes to show where people lived during which time period.

Palaeolithic	•
Mesolithic	•
Neolithic	•

•	tent
•	cave
•	roundhouse

3. Which of these were foods of Stone Age people? Tick **three**.

- ☐ nuts
- ☐ berries
- ☐ fish
- ☐ cheese

4. When was the Neolithic era? Tick **one**.

- ☐ 3,000,000BC
- ☐ 10,000BC
- ☐ 4500BC to 2400BC
- ☐ 800,000BC

5. During which time did Stone Age people begin to settle in villages?

6. Find and copy the materials that were used on the floor of tents during the Mesolithic era.

7. Would you have enjoyed living during the Stone Age? Give a reason for your answer.

