



How People Lived in Britain During the Stone Age

KS2 HISTORY

Ages 9-12 ⌚ 3 min read

What Was the Stone Age?

The **Stone Age** was a time when people in **Britain** used **stone tools** to survive. It lasted from about **800,000 years ago** until around **2,500 BCE**. People didn't have farms, shops, or houses like we do today—they lived very differently from us.

The Stone Age is split into three parts: the **Old Stone Age**, the **Middle Stone Age**, and the **New Stone Age**. Each period saw people becoming better at making tools and finding food.

Finding Food: Hunting and Gathering

Stone Age people didn't grow crops or raise animals. Instead, they hunted **wild animals** like deer, wild boar, and woolly mammoths, and gathered wild plants, berries, and nuts.

Think of it like going on a treasure hunt—you'd search forests and river valleys for anything you could eat, never knowing exactly what you'd find that day.

Groups of people moved around constantly, following animal herds and searching for new food sources. They might stay in one place for a few weeks or months, then pack up and travel to a new area.

Tools and Technology

Stone Age people were clever inventors. They made **tools** by hitting stone against stone to create sharp edges for cutting, scraping, and hunting. Early tools were simple, but by the **New Stone Age**, they had created axes, arrowheads, and needles.

Think of it like learning to build with LEGO—they started with simple shapes and gradually figured out how to make more complicated things.

They also learned to make **fire**, which kept them warm, cooked meat, and scared away dangerous animals. Fire was one of humanity's biggest discoveries!

Where Did They Live?

Stone Age Britons lived in caves, rock shelters, and temporary camps made from branches and animal hides. Some groups built simple huts from wood and stone. They didn't stay in one place because they followed the animals they hunted.

Caves provided natural protection from the weather and wild animals, making them popular homes. Famous examples include **Cheddar Cave** in **Somerset**, where scientists found the remains of people from **9,000 years ago**.

Art and Culture

Stone Age people were creative! They painted on cave walls, carved bone and antler into decorations, and made **cave art** showing animals and hunting scenes. These paintings tell us what they hunted and how important animals were to their survival.

They also buried their dead carefully, suggesting they believed in life after death and had spiritual beliefs.

The End of the Stone Age

The Stone Age ended when people learned to farm and settle in permanent villages. This was called the **Neolithic Revolution**. People began growing wheat and barley and raising sheep and cattle, changing how humans lived forever.