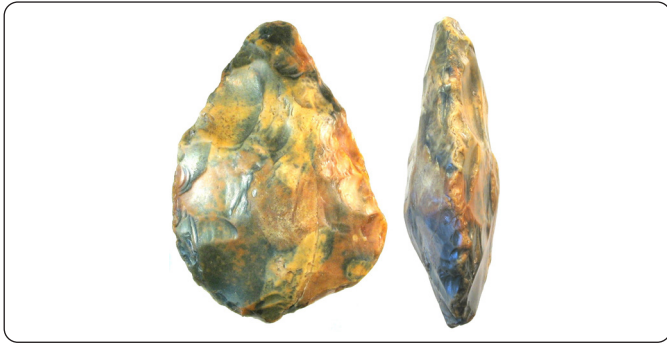


Palaeolithic tools and weapons

In the Palaeolithic, humans were just beginning to make tools. One of the first skills developed by early humans was using stones to hit and shape other stones. This was called knapping. Another skill was using stone flakes to carve wood and bone.



hand axe

Hand axes were stones sharpened at one or both ends. They were used for chopping wood and were sometimes thrown as weapons. They were held in the hand and swung.



spear

Spears were long wooden sticks, sometimes with sharpened points, which were thrown over long distances. Sometimes people tied sharpened rocks to the ends. They were used for hunting animals and in battle.



scraper

Scrapers were stones that were flattened by scraping them against other stones. They were used to scrape bits of flesh off animal furs and skins to make them into clothes and tents.



hammerstone

Hammerstones were large rocks used as hammers to create other tools. Suitable rocks were chosen as hammerstones, so they did not need to be shaped by humans.

Mesolithic tools and weapons

As the Stone Age progressed, so did the toolmaking skills of the early humans. In the Mesolithic, the main new skill was creating microliths, which were tiny flakes of stone that were turned into arrowheads, barbs on harpoons or cutting edges on tools.



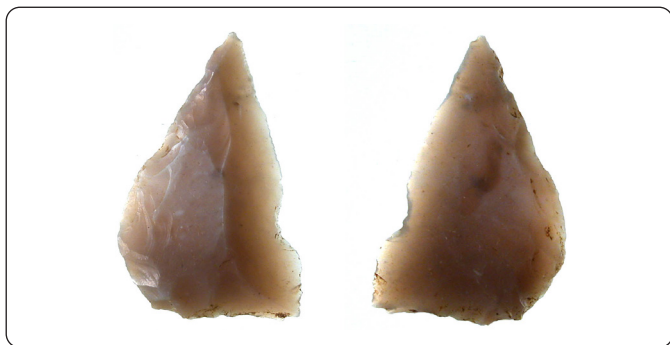
spear thrower

Spear throwers were flat, carved sticks with a handhold and a cup to hold the butt end of the spear. It acted like an extension of the arm and propelled the spear over longer distances, which helped when hunting or in battle.



harpoon

Harpoons were long spears attached to a rope, so that the hunter could pull their prey nearer to them. They were often used to catch fish. The end of the harpoon was made from wood or bone and had sharp points called barbs.



bow and arrow

Bows were tools for both hunting and farming. They were made of bendy wood with a string of plant fibres for the cord. They were used to fire arrows over long distances. Arrows were made from wood, with bird feathers at one end and a sharpened arrowhead or a stone microlith at the other.



tranchet adze

Tranchet adzes were cutting tools with sharp edges, made by removing thick flakes of flint from the edge of the tool. Archaeologists believe that most tranchet adzes were hafted, which means that they had handles.



Neolithic tools and weapons

In the Neolithic, toolmaking skills were honed to make improvements. Stones were ground and polished to make them sharper and were fastened onto handles. Hammers and chisels made carving easier and the new skill of drilling was introduced.



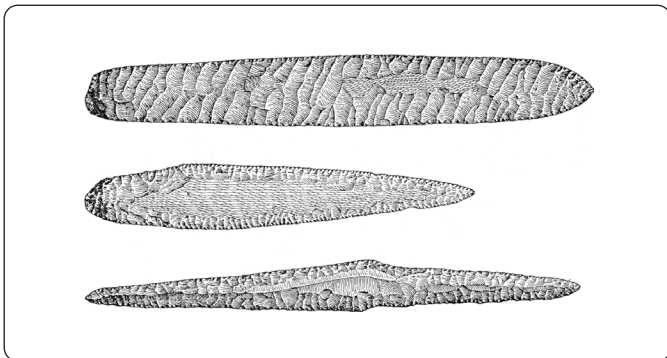
axe

Neolithic axes had handles, or hafts, which helped people to use them more easily and to swing them with more power. The axe heads were sharpened and polished to make them smooth, so that they could cut more cleanly.



arrowhead

Arrowheads were made from flint. They were thinner than previous ones and had a tapered point. This design caused minimal damage to the animals' skins or furs that would be used for clothing.



spearhead

Spearheads were created to make hunting easier. The blades were longer, thinner and sharper than earlier spearheads, so that they could kill an animal faster and do less damage to the skins and furs.



hammer and chisel

Hammers were made by drilling holes into heavy stones and inserting wooden handles. Chisels were made by sharpening long, thin stones. The chisel was positioned on a stone or piece of wood and hit on the end with the hammer to carve patterns or pictures.

