

Timeline of Prehistoric Britain

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Paleolithic: The Early Period of the Stone Age

Paleolithic [[edit](#)]

Main article: [Prehistoric Britain](#)

- **970,000 to 936,000 BP**
 - [Paleolithic](#) flint tools at [Happisburgh](#), Norfolk. The earliest known evidence of *Homo sp.* in Britain, presumed to be *Homo antecessor*.^{[1][2]}
- **700,000 BP**
 - Flint tools at [Pakefield](#). Possibly a cross between *Homo antecessor* and *Homo heidelbergensis*.^{[3][4][5][6][7]}
- **500,000 BP**
 - Remains of *Homo heidelbergensis* at [Eartham Pit](#), [Boxgrove](#), Sussex. The earliest human remains found in Britain.^[8]
- **478,000 BP**
 - [Anglian](#) glaciation begins - the most extreme in the [Pleistocene](#). Britain almost completely under ice.
- **450,000 BP**
 - The [Weald-Artois Anticline](#) breaks for the first time after a [glacial lake outburst flood](#). This landbridge to the continent was cut for the first time creating the [English Channel](#). It would now reflood after every glaciation ended.^[9]
- **425,000 BP**
 - [Hoxnian](#) Interglacial begins as the Anglian glaciation ends.
- **400,000 BP**
 - Bones of a young female [Neanderthal](#) (*Homo neanderthalensis*) at [Swanscombe Heritage Park](#), Kent. Earliest evidence of Neanderthals in Britain.^[10]
- **352,000 BP**
 - [Wolstonian](#) glaciation begins. Neanderthal occupation intermittent.
- **180,000 BP**
 - Neanderthals completely driven out. There will be no human occupation of any kind for many thousands of years.

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- **160,000 BP**
 - A second megaflood widens the break in the [Weald-Artois Anticline](#).^[9]
- **130,000 BP**
 - [Ipswichian](#) Interglacial begins.
- **125,000 BP**
 - Rising sea-levels cut Britain off completely from the continent. It is warm enough for [hippos](#) in the [Thames](#) and [lions](#) on the site of [Trafalgar Square](#), but Neanderthals did not cross the landbridge in time so there are no *Homo sp.* present.^[11]
- **115,000 BP**
 - [Devensian](#) glaciation ('Last Glacial Period') begins.
- **60,000 BP**
 - Sea levels have dropped sufficiently for Neanderthals to return to Britain in the warmer periods, possibly only as summer visitors.^[11]
- **44,000-41,000 BP**
 - Jawbone from [Kents Cavern](#). First evidence of [modern humans](#) (*Homo sapiens*) in Britain.^{[12][13]}
- **40,000 BP**
 - Neanderthals go extinct across Europe.
- **26,000-13,000 BP**
 - [Dimlington](#) stadial^[14] ('Last Glacial Maximum'). Britain almost entirely under ice. Southern England a polar desert. Humans driven out.
- **16,500-14,670 BP**
 - [Windermere](#) interstadial^[15] (the 'Allerød oscillation' or 'Late Glacial Interstadial'). Temperatures rise. *Homo sapiens* returns to Britain.
- **12,890-11,700 BP**
 - [Loch Lomond](#) stadial^[16] ('Younger Dryas'). Temperatures drop rapidly. Humans driven out.
- **11,700 BP**
 - The [Holocene](#) warming begins as the end of the Younger Dryas stadial ends the Pleistocene. The first [Mesolithic](#) people arrived and this marks the start of continuous human (*Homo sapiens* only) occupation.

Mesolithic: The Middle Period of the Stone Age

Mesolithic [[edit](#)]

Main article: [Prehistoric Britain § Mesolithic](#)

- c. **9335–9275 BC**
 - The earliest date for structures and artefacts at [Star Carr](#), Yorkshire, a site then inhabited for around 800 years.^[17]
- c. **7600 BC**
 - [Howick house](#), Northumberland, a Mesolithic building with stone tools, nut shells and bone fragments.
- c. **7150 BC**
 - [Cheddar Man](#), the oldest complete human skeleton in Britain
- c. **6500-6200 BC**
 - Rising sea-levels cause the flooding of [Doggerland](#). The culminating tsunami caused by the [Storegga Slide](#), cuts Great Britain off from the continent.
- c. **6000 BC**
 - The earliest evidence of some form of agriculture: [Wheat](#) of a variety grown in the Middle East was present on the Isle of Wight.^[18]
- c. **4600-3065 BC**
 - Date range of artefacts from a Mesolithic midden on [Oronsay](#), Inner Hebrides, giving evidence of diet.

Neolithic: The Latter Period of the Stone Age

Neolithic [[edit](#)]

Main article: [Neolithic British Isles](#)

- c. **4000 BC**
 - [Neolithic](#) period begins in Britain, introducing the first [agriculture](#).^[19]
- c. **3500 BC**
 - [Garth tsunami](#) impacts the [Northern Isles](#).^[20]
- c. **3000 BC**
 - First [henge](#) monuments.^[19]
- c. **2600 BC**
 - Main phase of construction at [Stonehenge](#) begins, replacing earlier wooden and earthen works.
- c. **2300 BC**
 - Arrival of the [Beaker People](#) in Britain, replacing 90% of the earlier population.^{[21][19]}

Bronze Age [\[edit \]](#)

Main article: [Bronze Age Britain](#)

- c. **1800 BC**
 - [Wessex culture](#) brings [bronze-working](#) to Britain.^[19]
- c. **1600 BC**
 - Last construction at [Stonehenge](#).
- c. **1400 BC**
 - Wessex culture replaced by more [agrarian](#) peoples; [stone circles](#) and early [hillforts](#) produced.^[19]
- c. **1380-550 BC**
 - [Uffington White Horse](#) hill figure cut in Oxfordshire.

Iron Age [edit]

Main article: [British Iron Age](#)

- c. **800 BC**
 - [Celts](#) bring [iron working](#) to Britain; [Hallstatt Culture](#).^[19]
- c. **400 BC**
 - [Parisi](#) tribe from northern [France](#) settle in [Yorkshire](#).^[19]
 - First [brochs](#) constructed.^[19]
- c. **330 BC**
 - [Pytheas of Massilia](#) circumnavigates Britain.^[19]
- c. **300 BC**
 - [La Tène](#) artwork introduced from northern France.^[19]
- c. **100 BC**
 - First wave of [Belgic](#) invaders settle in the south-east, establishing the [Catuvellauni](#) and [Trinovantes](#) tribes.^[19]
 - First [coins](#) introduced.^[19]
- c. **80 BC**
 - Second wave of Belgic invaders settle in [Sussex](#), [Berkshire](#), and [Hampshire](#), establishing the [Atrebates](#) and [Regnenses](#) tribes.^[19]

Iron Age

- **55 BC**
 - **Commius**, chieftain of the Atrebates, captured by the British after serving as an envoy to **Rome**.^[19]
 - 26 August – **Julius Caesar** lands between **Deal** and **Walmer**, wins skirmishes against the British, and frees Commius.^[19]
 - 31 August – Britons in war-**chariots** defeat the Romans. Romans return to **Gaul**.^[19]
- **54 BC**
 - July – Julius Caesar invades Britain and defeats the Catuvellauni under **Cassivellaunus**.^[19]
 - September – Tribute fixed, and peace agreed between the Catevellauni and the Trinovantes, allied with Rome. Romans return to **Gaul**.^[19]
- **50 BC**
 - Fleeing to Britain after a failed revolt in Gaul, **Commius** becomes chieftain of the **Atrebates**.^[19]
- **34 BC**
 - Emperor **Octavian** makes an alliance with the Atrebates and Trinovantes.^[19]
- c. **25 BC**
 - **Tincommius**, leader of the Atrebates, issues Roman-style coinage.^[19]