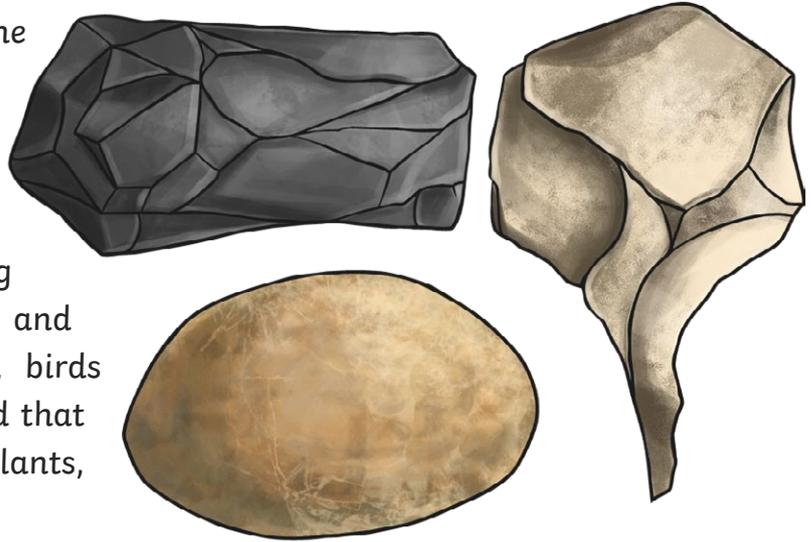


The Stone Age

The Stone Age is said to have begun in Ireland before 8000 BC, although it is hard to tell exactly when the first people arrived in Ireland as they didn't write anything down. The Stone Age is divided into three main parts, the Early Stone Age, the Middle Stone Age and the New Stone Age.

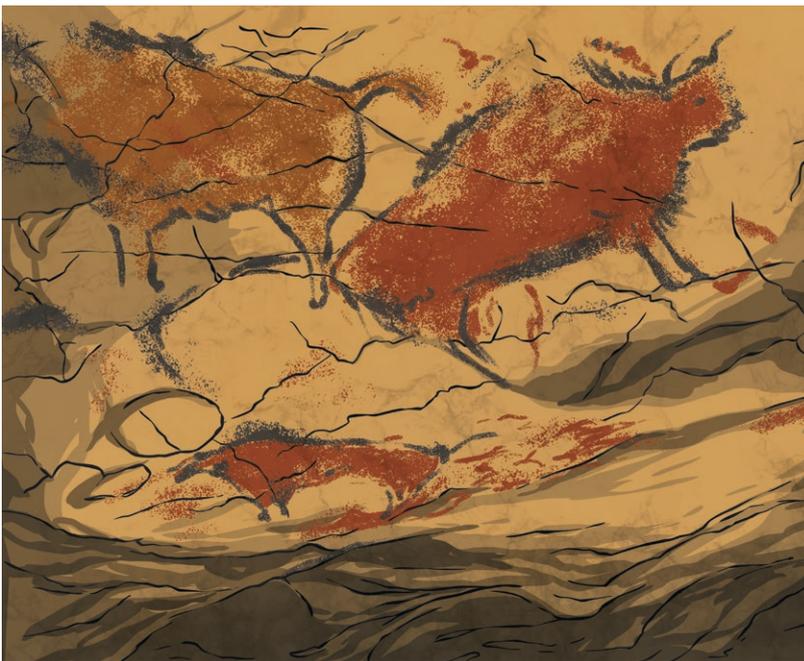
The Early Stone Age and the Middle Stone Age people were hunter-gatherers. They had not yet learned how to plant crops or raise animals. They got their food by hunting animals and gathering plants and berries. They hunted animals, birds and fish and they gathered food that they could pick off trees and plants, such as nuts, berries, and fruit.



Because of how they had to get their food, they lived near lakes and rivers, where food was more easily accessible. They lived in huts made from rushes or animal skins. Some groups would live in caves. The Middle Stone Age People started to make more advanced tools such as harpoons, spears and axes from wood and stone

They had to move from place to place regularly as their food sources would be used up and they would move to a new area in order to find more food. The name '**nomads**'

was given to these people as they didn't set up their home and stay in one place.



The Stone Age people used to paint on the walls of caves using charcoal, earth, animal fat, coloured stones and water. These were called cave paintings and they tell us a lot about the Stone Age people. They showed us what they ate and how these people lived.

The New Stone Age people, who were also known as the Neolithic Age people, arrived in Ireland around 4000 BC. They arrived from Europe and the UK and they brought lots of interesting new ways to grow food and make new tools with them. They built walls, cut down trees and separated the ground into fields, where they would sow crops such as wheat, oats, and barley. This was the start of farming in Ireland. They also brought animals with them when they came to Ireland such as cows, sheep and goats, which they kept on their farms and used for both clothing and food. They cooked their food on open fires in their houses.

The introduction of farming with the Neolithic People meant that they did not have to move around in search of food as the Old Stone Age and Middle Stone Age people did. They were no longer nomads. They also lived in larger communities and would help each other with farming and finding food.

The Stone Age people used their basic tools to build huge tombs in which they buried their dead. The most famous of these tombs in Ireland is Newgrange in County Meath. They also built stone circles, which we believe were also used as different types of graves.

Although there are no written records to tell us about the Stone Age people, through evidence found by archaeologists and structures, such as Newgrange, we can tell that the Stone Age people were very hard-working, intelligent people as they adapted to new ways of life and learned new skills that helped them to survive for thousands of years.

