

# The Stone Age



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# The Stone Age in Ireland

The Stone Age in Ireland is divided into three different periods:

## 1. The Early Stone Age

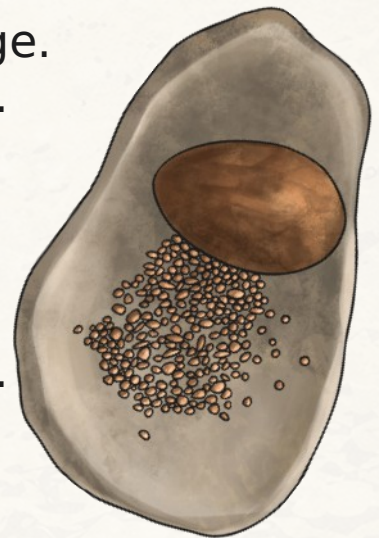
- This time was also known as Palaeolithic Stone Age.
- It started about 2 million years ago and lasted until around 8000 BC.
- So far, there is no evidence of people living in Ireland at this time

## 2. The Middle Stone Age

- This time was also known as the Mesolithic Stone Age.
- It lasted from around 8000 BC until around 4000 BC.
- This is when the first people came to Ireland.

## 3. The New Stone Age

- This was also known as the Neolithic Stone Age.
- It lasted from around 4000 BC until around 2500 BC.





# Food

## Mesolithic Stone Age



The Mesolithic Stone Age people were hunter-gathers.

They got their food from animals that they killed and from trees and plants.

They ate animals such as wild boar, fish, birds, nuts, berries and plants.



# Food

## Neolithic Stone Age

The Neolithic Stone Age people had more advanced tools to kill animals.

They also learnt how to sow crops and began farming.

They learnt how to domesticate animals to use on the farms, such as pigs and sheep, which they used for food and clothing.





# Clothing



The Stone Age people made clothes from animal skins.

They also created jewellery out of animals bones.





# Homes

The Mesolithic Stone Age people would have lived in warm caves where they could light fires and protect themselves from the cold and bad weather.

They lived near rivers and lakes. When they ran out of food, they moved to another location. They were known as nomadic people.

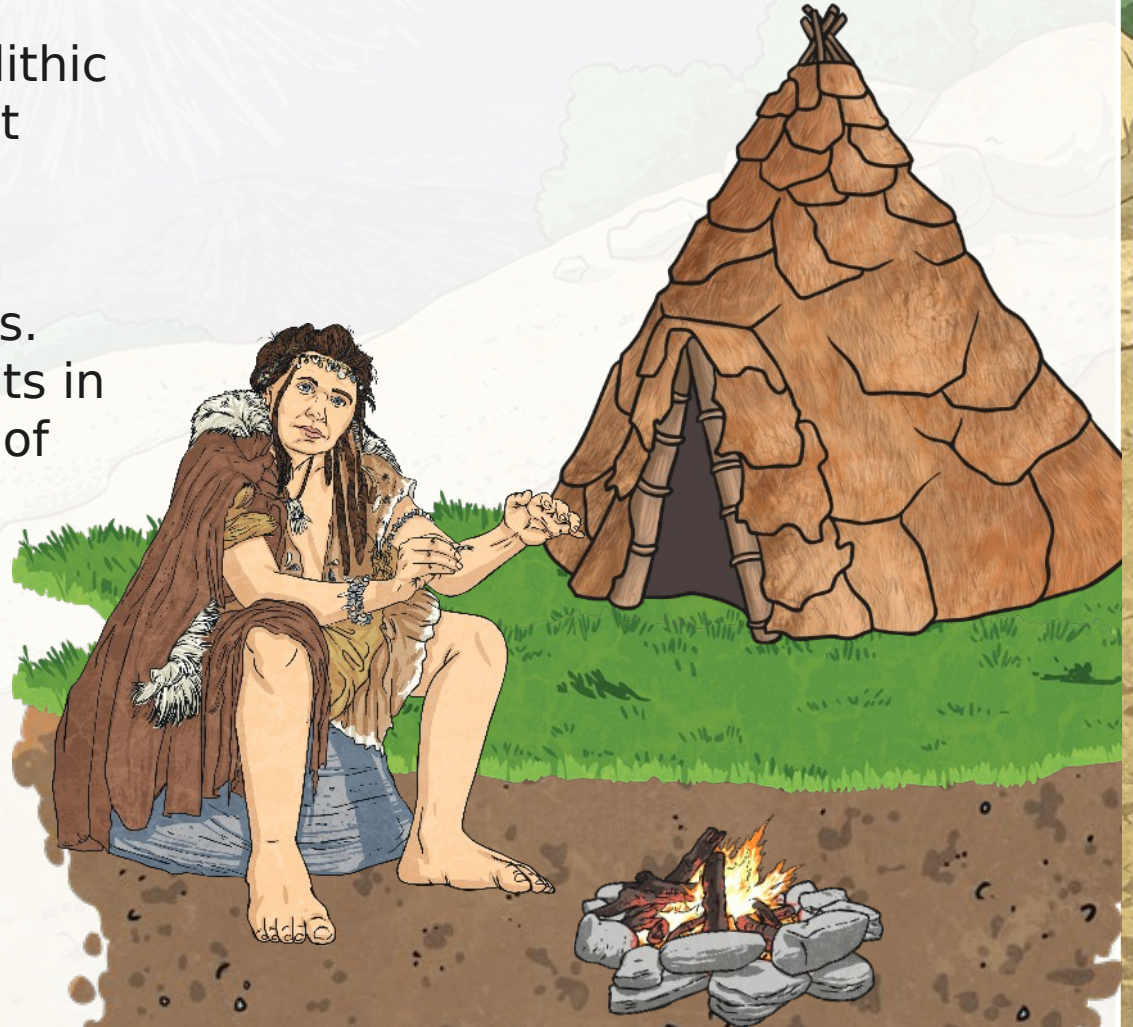




# Homes

Sometimes, the Mesolithic Stone Age people built small round huts.

They were made from timber posts and twigs. They covered their huts in animals skins or sods of earth.





# Homes

The Neolithic Stone Age people set up more permanent structures on their farms. They built round huts, often made from stone. The roofs were made from thatch or covered in animals skins.

They either made their fires outside the hut or had a hole in the roof which would allow smoke from the fire to escape through.

They did not need to move around in search of food as they had their farms to grow and keep food.





# Tools



The Stone Age gets its name because of the type of tools used by people during this time.

They used tools carved from stone, animal bones and wood.

Types of tools included spears, borers, axes and arrowheads.



# Cave Paintings



The Stone Age people drew pictures on the walls of caves. This is one way in which we learnt about how they lived.

These were called cave paintings and were created using charcoal, earth, animal fat, coloured stones and water.





# Monuments

As well as the homes they lived in, the Stone Age people also built other structures. Most of these were mainly used as graves or burial sites. There are some still standing today, which shows how strong and well built they were.

There are four main types of tombs. These are;

1. Court cairns
2. Passage tombs
3. Portal tombs
4. Wedge tombs





# Court Cairns

Court Cairns are a group of monuments constructed together.

The largest court cairn in Ireland is Creevykeel and can be found in County Sligo.





# Passage Tombs

Passage tombs have a narrow passageway made of large stones which lead to one or more burial chambers which have been covered in earth or stone.

The most famous passage tomb in Ireland is Newgrange.

Another famous passage tomb in Ireland is Knowth, which is found at Brú na Bóinne.





# Portal Tombs



Portal tombs consist of at least three stones standing upright that are supporting a large, flat, horizontal capstone.

An example of a Portal tomb can be found at The Burren in County Clare and is called the Poul nabrone Dolmen.



# Wedge Tombs

Wedge tombs are large stone boxes with a stone slab placed on top as a roof.

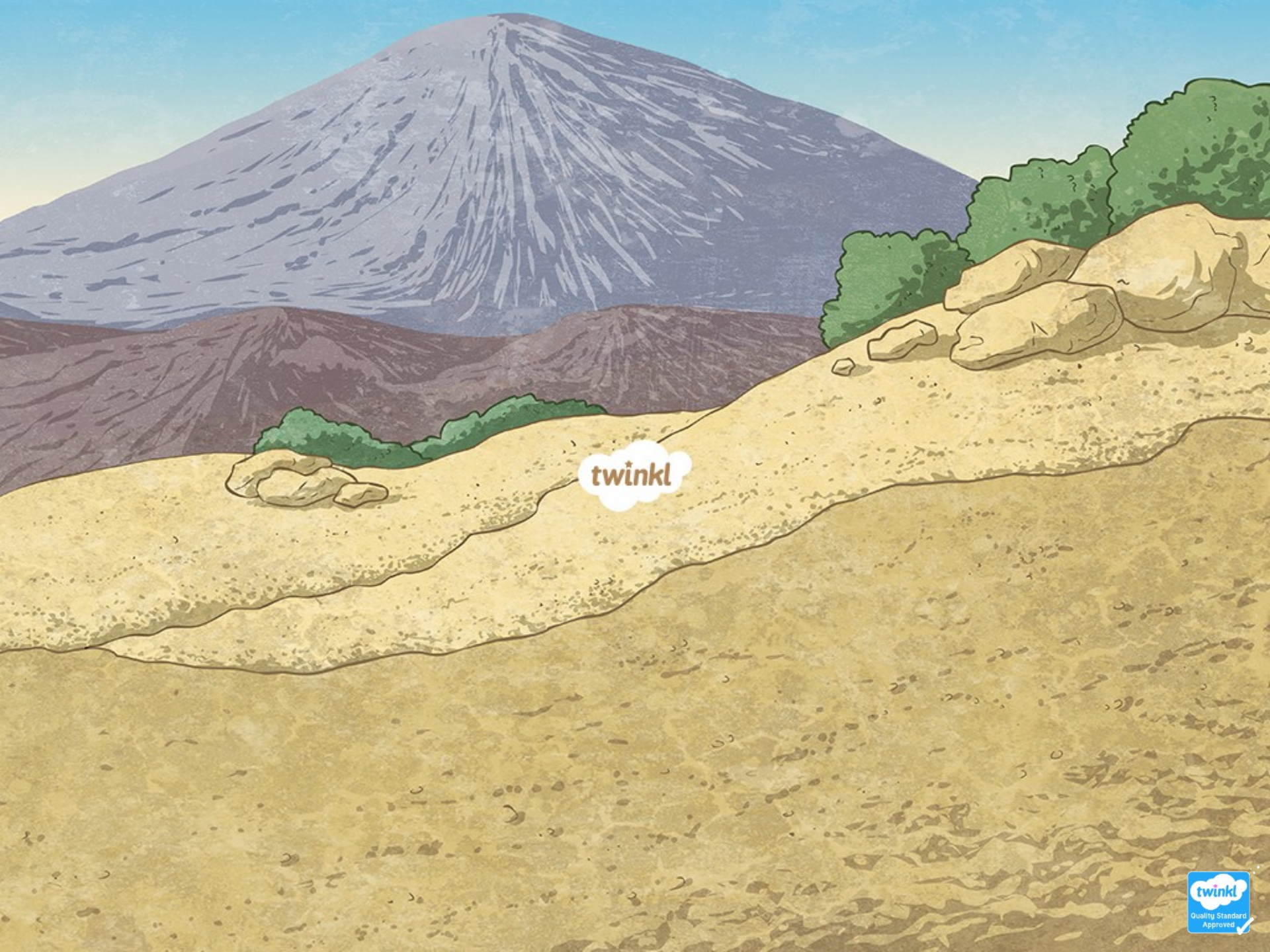
There are over 400 wedge tombs to be found around Ireland.

Carrowcrom Wedge Tomb is one of the best preserved wedge tombs in Ireland.

Several wedge tombs can also be found near The Burren in County Clare, such as Ballymihil Wedge Tomb.







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