



## Video transcript

# What tools did hunter-gatherers use?

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A very long time ago, in ancient Britain, there were no written words. This was the time before history was recorded - it's prehistory.

The only clues to life back then come from the objects, burials, cave paintings and monuments which speak to us about Britain's ancient past. My name is Raksha Dave. I'm an archaeologist and I'm in search of Britain's Ancient Voices.

My job as an archaeologist means I spend a lot of my time searching for clues about ancient Britain, and sometimes, if I'm lucky, I get to find something like this.

You might be mistaken for thinking this is just a lump of rock. But in fact it's a very carefully shaped tool called a hand axe, made out of flint.

These tools were made a very, very long time ago - over 10,000 years ago, in what we now call the Stone Age. And to show how long ago that is, I'm going to walk back in time.

This is today. Imagine that every step I took was equal to 100 years. Then to go back to the Stone Age, I'd have to take 100 steps. This could take quite a while.

After taking 20 steps, I've gone back 2,000 years. This was the first time that history was written down. And now I'm going back into pre-history. And 100 steps back in time, is 10,000 years ago. This is the Stone Age!

Britain looked very different back then. There was no internet, there were no houses that were built out of brick, no cars - there wasn't even any metal! Just thick, dark forests with animals hiding in them.

So Stone Age people needed sharp, strong tools to cut trees down and to hunt the animals for food. And this is where a stone called flint came in. There's a real skill to making tools out of flint.

**Ian:** Stone Age man could work these fantastically into all sorts of tools for everyday life.

First thing we would do is take a small piece of flint. And if you want to take a flake off, like this - as you can see, one's come off here - you'd hit it with a stone, what we call a hammerstone, so you aim and you'll strike here and you'll get a little flake. Okay.

**Raksha:** So I hold it like this and aim for - is it this bit here?

**Ian:** Yes, just on the ridge there.

**Raksha:** Okay!

**Ian:** That's it. There you go...one little flake.

**Raksha:** Ahh! Excellent!... So this is actually really skilled work.

**Ian:** Yes, people of the Stone Age knew everything about how to strike that flint off.

**Raksha:** The flakes we've actually managed to knock off are actually really sharp, aren't they?

**Ian:** They are indeed! We can actually drag a piece of flint...

**Raksha:** Wow!

**Ian:** Straight through! Once you've knocked off all your flakes, you can make a nice arrow.

**Raksha:** They look rather deadly but what I'm wondering is, how do you actually stick these pieces on? Is this Stone Age glue?

**Ian:** It is a Stone Age glue and it's made from pine resin and beeswax, mixed with a bit of charcoal. This would be very effective at killing the deer to bring home your dinner for your family or your tribe.

**Raksha:** Hang on ...So that would kill a large deer?

**Ian:** Easily!

**Raksha:** That's pretty impressive.

Animals were very important to Stone Age people, and not just for food. Their skins were used for clothes, bags and their bones were particularly useful for small things like tools, jewellery and even instruments.

But none of this would have been possible without the people who made tools out of stone.