

Stone Tools

Every day people use tools to make their work easier. From kitchen knives to computers, these tools have become essential to our everyday lives.

People aren't the only animals to make and use tools, but the complexity of our tools has no equal.

The earliest tools in the archaeological record are hammer stones and choppers, possibly about 3.3 million years old. There may have been other even older tools made of wood or bone, but those materials decay quite easily. Stone tools can last millions of years!



84.1.4, mano, stone

Photograph by B. Bernard

Projectile points are razor sharp and used in hunting. They are typically made from stone that when chipped off, creates a sharp flake. These flakes can then be worked with other tools to make the distinctly shaped and functional points we are familiar with. Projectile points are always attached or hafted to other objects, such as arrows or spears, and thrown or shot at the hunting target.

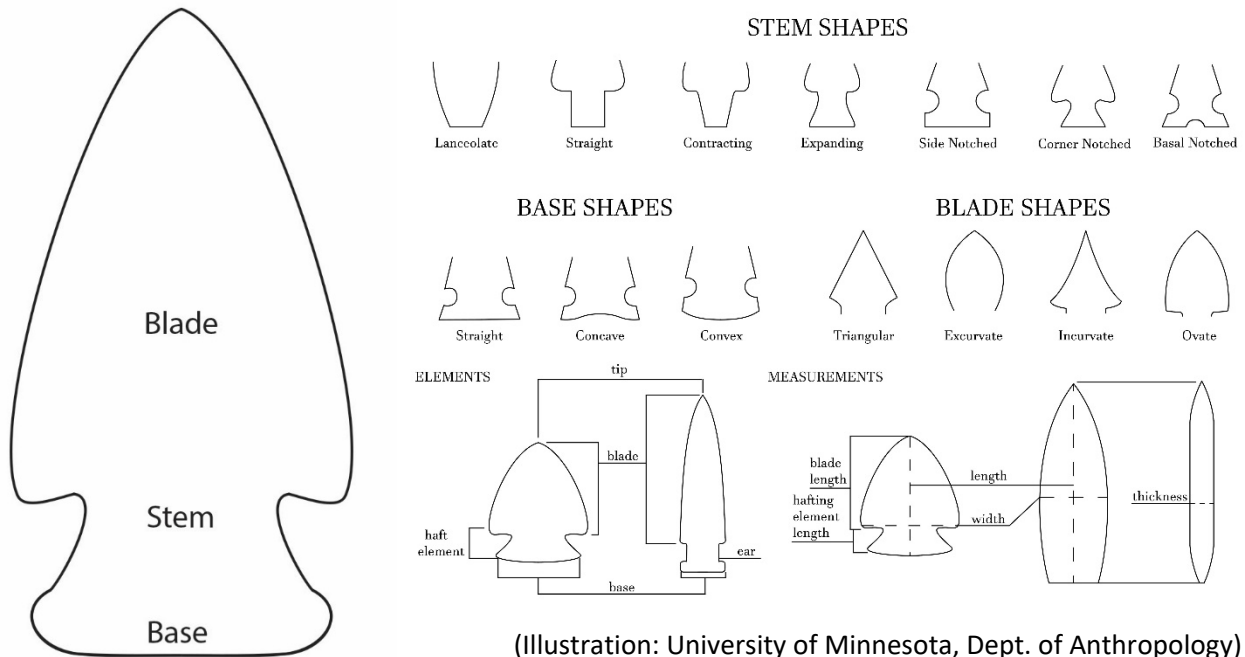
Stone tools are a very important part of the archaeological record and should never be collected without proper permits. If you find one, observe it with your eyes only (or take a picture!) and contact the State Archaeologist to report anything special.



Late prehistoric points –Office of Contract Archaeology, UNM

Stone tool artifacts are in a category called lithics. There are two types of stone tools identified: ground stone tools including manos (grinding stones-left) and hand axes, and flaked stone tools including knives, scrapers and projectile points (arrow heads and spear points-above).

All points have basic parts consisting of a stem, base and blade. The shape of these basic parts can vary for certain uses.



I Spy Guessing Game!

Now put to use all that you've learned about projectile points and try this fun guessing game.

1. See below for examples of a variety of projectile points from the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology archaeology collection. For each point, identify the stem, base and blade shape and describe the relative size of the blade (for example: the blade length is greater than the blade width) and write that down on a separate piece of paper.
2. Then, pick one point to describe to someone using the terms from the figure above. Can they guess which blade you are talking about? Now switch so that you can do the guessing.
3. Discuss what you think the points may have been used for.
4. Sketch a tool of your own design. Describe how it would be used.

Projectile Points from the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology Archaeology Collection

Describe on a separate piece of paper the blade, stem and base shape and relative size of each point.



Point 1



Point 2



Point 3



Point 4



Point 5



Point 6

Resources:

Smithsonian- Human origins- Ancient tools

<https://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/behavior/stone-tools>

Types of stone tools and uses

<https://www.sfu.ca/archaeology/museum/exhibits/past-exhibits/wood--bone--and-stone-tools/stone-tools.html>

Living in the Stone Age: Stone tools (3:11) Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkcZrnFDXUc>

Stone Tool Technology of Human ancestor- HHMI Biointeractive Video (5:41)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L87Wdt044b0>

Clovis and Folsom points

https://www.crowcanyon.org/EducationProducts/peoples_mesa_verde/paleoindian_artifacts.asp

Oldest Known Stone tools Discovered 3.3 Million Years old (2:43) Youtube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUC0hz_7eU

Chipped Stone Analysis

<http://miaclab.org/chipped-stone>

When we First Made tools PBS Eons- (10:09)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFI50iSPWeI>

Answers:

Point	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number	66.36.2	2015.39.43	2007.17.1	95.45.4	68.94.5	36.5.242
Type	spear point, probably ceremonial, of chert	San Jose dart point of obsidian	atlatl dart point ("Folsom Point") of chalcedony	Armijo dart point of chert	Clovis point of chert	En Medio dart point
Age	Hopewell culture (200 B.C.–A.D. 400)	Middle Archaic (4500-3500 years before present)	Folsom complex (9000–8000 B.C.)	Middle-late Archaic (4500-3000 years before present)	Clovis culture (11,500–11,000 B.C.)	Late Archaic (3500-2000 years before present)
Photographer	B. Bernard	J. Birkmann	B. Bernard	J. Birkmann	C. Baudoin	K. Price
Blade shape	ovate	triangular	excurvate	excurvate	ovate	triangular
Stem shape	expanding	side-notched to corner-notched	lanceolate	side-notched	lanceolate	side-notched
Base shape	concave	concave	concave	straight	concave	convex
Size	length greater than width	length greater than width	length greater than width	length is greater than width	length greater than width	length greater than width



Lulu with a collection of projectile points from the education collection