

Stonehenge



Stonehenge is one of the most famous sights in England. Its history is also very interesting.

Stonehenge is a circle of stones in the south of England. It was started in the Stone Age and continued to be built into the Bronze Age.

First Stage

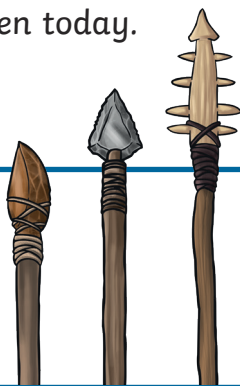
The stone circle was built in several stages. They started by digging a circular ditch using picks made from antlers. There were two entrances to the circle. There were 56 pits dug around it that were one metre deep with flat bottoms.

Second Stage

In the second stage, 82 stones were added in a double circle pattern. These stones came all the way from south Wales, 240 miles away. They were called bluestones because they looked blue when they were broken or wet. The bluestones were around two metres tall and over one metre wide.

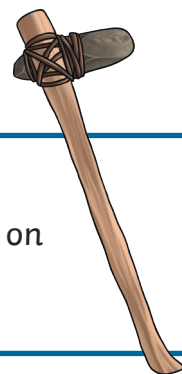
Third Stage

More stones were added about 500 years later. These were called Sarsen Stones. They were over four metres high and two metres wide and weighed up to 30 tonnes. An outer circle was created by laying stones horizontally across the top. In the middle of the circle, more stones were arranged in a horseshoe shape. At the centre, there was a stone called the Altar Stone. In the final stage of building, the original bluestones were rearranged in the horseshoe and circle shape that can be seen today.



Did You Know...?

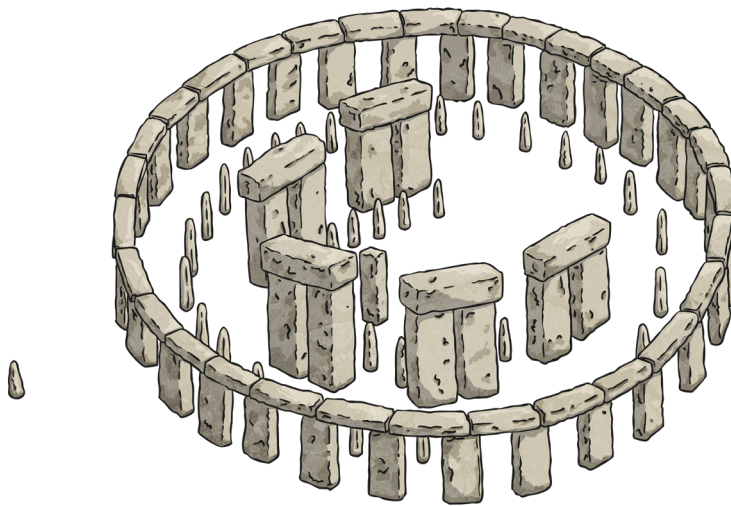
Pictures of axe-heads and daggers were carved on some of the Sarsen stones.



The stones had bumps and holes carved into them so that they fit together. They were carefully lined up so that the sunrise can be seen at midsummer, and sunset can be seen at midwinter at opposite ends of the circle. The stones were incredibly heavy, and it probably took around 600 men to move each massive stone by pulling them on ropes over a line of logs. The stones were lifted by sliding them into holes and using large wooden frames and ropes to pull them up in the right direction.

The Slaughter Stone

One of the stones in Stonehenge looks red when it is wet. This is called the Slaughter Stone. The iron in the rock gives it a red appearance.



Stonehenge Questions

1. What shape is Stonehenge? Tick **one**.

- a square a circle
 a triangle a rectangle

2. What was used to dig the circular ditch?

3. How many stones were added in the second stage of building? Tick **one**.

- 56 240
 82 30

4. Why do you think the bluestones from south Wales were used?

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

5. How much did Sarsen Stones weigh? Tick **one**.

- up to 30 tonnes up to 100 tonnes
 up to 500 tonnes up to 82 tonnes

6. What pictures can be found on the Sarsen stones?

7. How many men did it take to move each Sarsen stone? Tick **one**.

- 500 200
 600 1000

Stonehenge Answers

1. What shape is Stonehenge? Tick **one**.

- a square **a circle**
 a triangle a rectangle

2. What was used to dig the circular ditch?

Picks made from antlers were used to dig the ditch.

3. How many stones were added in the second stage of building? Tick **one**.

- 56 240
 82 30

4. Why do you think the bluestones from south Wales were used?

Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

I believe the bluestones from South Wales were used because they were unusual and special because they appeared blue whenever they were broken or wet.

5. How much did Sarsen Stones weigh? Tick **one**.

- up to 30 tonnes** up to 100 tonnes
 up to 500 tonnes up to 82 tonnes

6. What pictures can be found on the Sarsen stones?

axe-heads and daggers

7. How many men did it take to move each Sarsen stone? Tick **one**.

- 500 200
 600 1000

Stonehenge



Stonehenge is one of the most famous structures in England and has a fascinating history. The prehistoric monument is a circle of stones in the south of England, in Wiltshire. It was started 5000 years ago during the Stone Age, around 3100-3000BC.

Aubrey Holes

Firstly, a circular ditch was dug using picks made from antlers. The central area was about 100 metres wide and there were two entrances. There were 56 pits dug around the circle (called 'Aubrey holes') which were one metre wide and one metre deep.

Bluestones

Secondly, many years later, 82 more stones were added. These came all the way from Preseli Hills in south Wales. They were called bluestones (because they appeared to be slightly blue when wet or broken). The stones, which weighed up to four tonnes each, were transported the 240 miles from south Wales by land and water. These stones were set up in a double circle pattern. During this second stage, the north-eastern entrance was widened and the largest stone, known as the Hell Stone, was added.



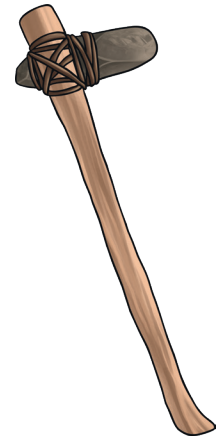
Sarsen Stones

Thirdly, about 500 years later, the Sarsen stones were added. They came from the Marlborough Downs, about 25 miles from Stonehenge. The Sarsen stones were huge. They were around 4 metres high and 2 metres wide and weighed up to 30 tonnes. An outer circle was created with stones laid horizontally across the top. In the middle of the circle, more stones were arranged in a horseshoe shape. At the centre was a stone called the Altar Stone. In the final stage of building, the original bluestones were rearranged in the horseshoe and circle shape that can be seen today.

Pictures of axe-heads and daggers were carved on some of the Sarsen stones. These were possibly symbols of power. The stones also had bumps and holes carved into them so that they fit together. They were carefully lined up so that the sunrise could be seen at midsummer and sunset at midwinter at opposite ends of the circle.

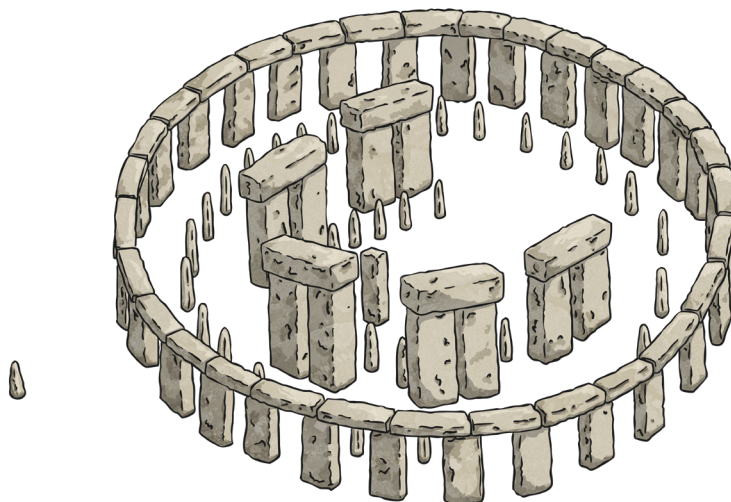


The Sarsen stones were incredibly heavy, and it is thought that it took around 600 men to move each massive stone. The stones would have been moved using a combination of rollers, ropes, wooden levers and pulleys.



The Slaughter Stone

One of the stones in Stonehenge is made of sandstone which looks red when it is wet. This is because the iron in the stone reacts with rainwater. It was called the Slaughter Stone by the Victorians who assumed that the red in the stone was blood from sacrifices that were made on it years earlier.



Stonehenge – Questions

1. Where in England is Stonehenge? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essex | <input type="checkbox"/> Northumberland |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wales | <input type="checkbox"/> Wiltshire |

2. What were the 56 pits that were dug around the circle in the first stage called?

3. Where did the bluestones come from? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> north Wales | <input type="checkbox"/> east Wales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> south Wales | <input type="checkbox"/> west Wales |

4. What was added to Stonehenge during the third stage of building?

5. Which of the following were carved on some of the Sarsen stones? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> swords | <input type="checkbox"/> antlers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> daggers | <input type="checkbox"/> saws |

6. At what time of year could the sunrise be seen from Stonehenge? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> midwinter | <input type="checkbox"/> midspring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> midautumn | <input type="checkbox"/> midsummer |

7. Explain how the Sarsen stones were moved.

8. In your own words, explain how the Slaughter Stone got its name.

Stonehenge Answers

1. Where in England is Stonehenge? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essex | <input type="checkbox"/> Northumberland |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wales | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wiltshire |

2. What were the 56 pits that were dug around the circle in the first stage called?
Aubrey holes

3. Where did the bluestones come from? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> north Wales | <input type="checkbox"/> east Wales |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> south Wales | <input type="checkbox"/> west Wales |

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Sarsen stones

5. Which of the following were carved on some of the Sarsen stones? Tick **one**.

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|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> swords | <input type="checkbox"/> antlers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> daggers | <input type="checkbox"/> saws |

6. At what time of year could the sunrise be seen from Stonehenge? Tick **one**.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> midwinter | <input type="checkbox"/> midspring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> midautumn | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> midsummer |

7. Explain how the Sarsen stones were moved.

Pupil's own response, such as: The Sarsen stones were moved by around 600 men who would have used rollers, ropes, wooden levers and pulleys to lift and pull them.

8. In your own words, explain how the Slaughter Stone got its name.

Pupil's own response, such as: The Slaughter Stone got its name from the Victorians because they thought that the stone turned red when it rained because it was blood from sacrifices that were performed on it in the past.

Stonehenge

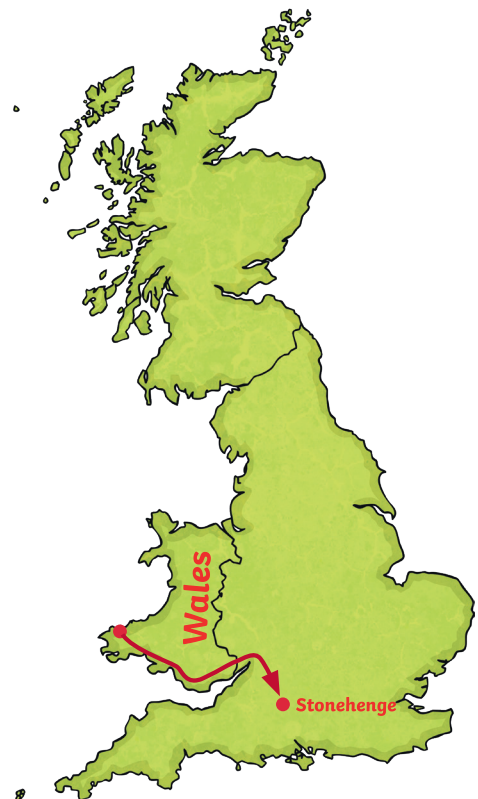


Stonehenge is one of the most famous structures in England which has a fascinating history. The prehistoric monument is a circle of stones in the south of England, in Wiltshire. It was started 5000 years ago during the Stone Age, around 3100-3000 BC. Up to 150 people

were buried there when it was just an earthwork. The stones that we see today were added at a later date.

Initially, a circular ditch was dug using picks made from antlers. Bones of oxen and deer were found in the bottom of the ditch along with flint tools. The central area was about 100 metres in diameter and there were two entrances. There were 56 pits dug around the circle that were one metre wide and one metre deep. They are known as 'Aubrey holes', named after John Aubrey, who is thought to have first identified them in the 17th century. The purpose of these holes is uncertain but it is thought that they could have held timber posts or stones, or were used as part of a religious ceremony.

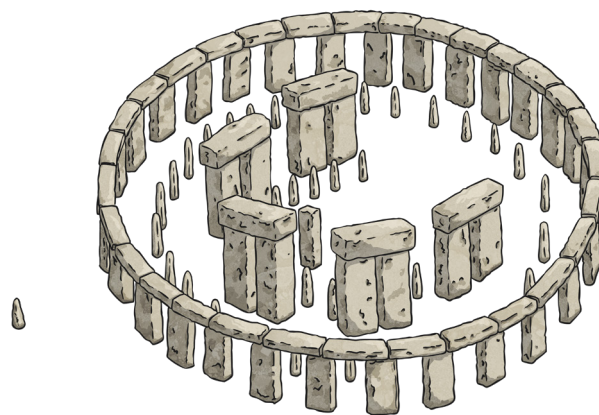
The second stage of construction could have begun between 4000 and 5000 years ago. 82 stones, which came all the way from Preseli Hills in South Wales, were added at this point. They were called bluestones as they appeared to be slightly blue when wet or broken. The stones, which weighed up to four tonnes each, were transported the 240 miles from south Wales by land and water, before roads and lorries existed. These stones were set up in a double circle pattern. During this second stage, the north-eastern entrance was widened and the largest stone, known as the Hell Stone, was added. The Avenue was started. This was an earth corridor dug to connect Stonehenge with the River Avon.



The third stage involved the addition of the Sarsen stones about 500 years later. They came from the Marlborough Downs, about 25 miles from Stonehenge. The Sarsen stones were enormous; around 4 metres high and 2 metres wide and weighed up to 30 tonnes. An outer circle was created with stones laid horizontally across the top. In the middle of the circle, more stones were arranged in a horseshoe shape. At the centre was a stone called the Altar Stone. In the final stage of building, the original bluestones were rearranged in the horseshoe and circle shape that can be seen today.

The stones were positioned very carefully to align with sunrise at midsummer and sunset at midwinter at opposite ends of the circle. It has been estimated that the three phases of construction could have taken more than thirty million hours of labour. Modern calculations suggest that it would have taken 500 men using leather ropes to pull one Sarsen stone, with an extra 100 men needed to lay the huge rollers in front of the sledge. It is thought that the horizontal stones would have been raised to the height of the vertical stones by building up wooden platforms.

No one knows why Stonehenge was built. Some suggestions are that it was a special burial ground, a place of healing, an astronomical calendar or a place of worship.



Stonehenge – Questions

1. **Find** and **copy** a word that means **landmark**.

2. How wide was the central area of Stonehenge in the first stage of construction? Tick **one**.

- 1000 metres 56 metres
 100 metres 10 metres

3. Explain what 'Aubrey holes' are. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

4. What came from Preseli Hills? Tick **one**.

- Sarsen stones bluestones
 flint tools the Altar stone

5. Why is it so impressive that the Sarsen stones were transported 240 miles?
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

6. What did the Avenue connect Stonehenge with?

7. **Find** and **copy** a word which means **line up**.

8. Explain why the construction of Stonehenge took so long.
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Stonehenge Answers

1. **Find and copy** a word that means **landmark monument**
2. How wide was the central area of Stonehenge in the first stage of construction? Tick **one**.
 1000 metres 56 metres
 100 metres 10 metres
3. Explain what 'Aubrey holes' are. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
Pupil's own response, such as: Aubrey holes were one metre wide and one metre deep holes dug in the ground around the circle of Stonehenge in the first stage of construction. They are called Aubrey holes because they are named after John Aubrey who first identified them in the 17th century. No one really knows that they were used for but it is thought that they could have held timber posts or were used for religious ceremonies.
4. What came from Preseli Hills? Tick **one**.
 Sarsen stones **bluestones**
 flint tools the Altar stone
5. Why is it so impressive that the Sarsen stones were transported 240 miles?
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
Pupil's own response, such as: It is so impressive that the bluestones were transported 240 miles because they each weighed up to four tonnes. They were brought from south Wales to Wiltshire by land and water but without roads and trucks to help.
6. What did the Avenue connect Stonehenge with?
The Avenue connected Stonehenge to the River Avon.
7. **Find and copy** a word which means **line up align**
8. Explain why the construction of Stonehenge took so long.
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
Pupil's own response, such as: The construction of Stonehenge took so long because the stones that were used were huge and some weighed up to 30 tonnes. They did not have machines or cranes in those days. Instead, it would have taken about 600 men to pull the Sarsen stones using rollers and leather ropes. They would also have had to build wooden platforms to raise the vertical stones on top of the horizontal ones.