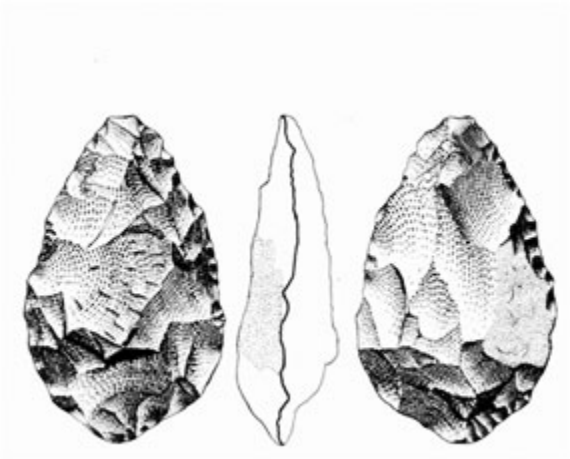
Prehistoric Knapped Blades or Tools



Sketches of fully knapped, Mode 2 tools

From the 19th century archaeologists began turning up and categorizing prehistoric Worked tools . They referred to these groups of stone tools as “industries” and named them after the site where they were first found. For example, the Olduwan Industry was named after tools found in the Olduvai Gorge in Africa; and the Acheulean Industry was named after Saint Acheul in France. In the 1960s a new method of categorization was adopted by the archeological community worldwide. In this method, the appearance of the stones, which was based on the available “technology” used to shape them, was placed in a fixed sequence from Modes 1 through 5.

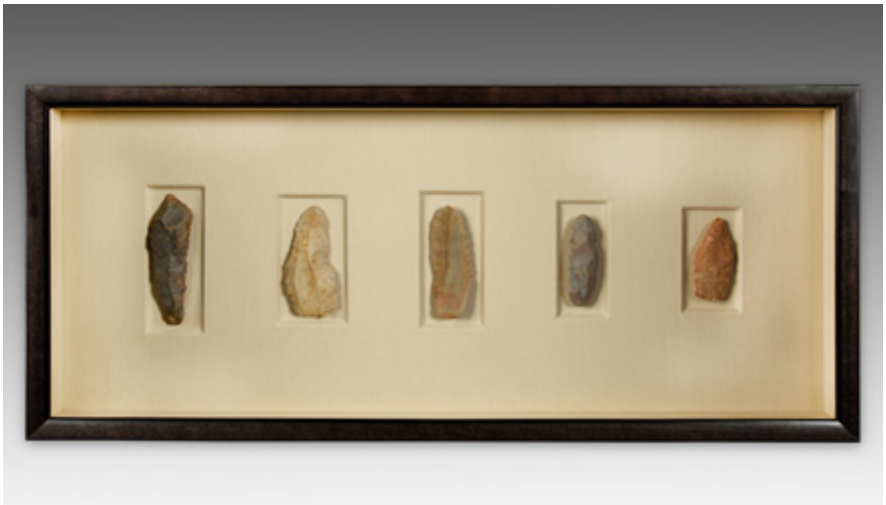


Example of a fully knapped tool

The earliest stone tools in the life span of the genus “Homo” are Mode 1 tools, which come from the Olduwan Industry in Africa, mentioned above. In these tools only one end was shaped. The earliest known Olduwan tools date from 2.6 million years ago. Eventually, more complex, Mode 2 tools began to be developed through the Acheulean Industry. These tools appear to be hand axes and knives, are fully knapped , and characterized as “biface,” the sharpest point running around the length of the object. Mode 2 objects first appeared in the archeological record as early as 1.7 million years ago in the West Turkana area of Kenya in East Africa , but it is clear that this “technology” spread westward, as stone tools have been excavated as far west as the Sahara in Mali, West Africa .

The famous archaeologists who were the prime excavators at Olduvai Gorge, Louis and Mary Leakey, defined a “developed Oldowan” period based on evidence of an overlap in the Oldowan and Acheulean, or Modes 1 and 2. In the existing species specific view, the Oldowan related to Homo Habilis, an extinct species considered to be one of the earliest ancestors of modern humans and the earliest hominid to make tools. The Acheulean tools, like those in the Primitive collection related to Homo Erectus, which means “upright man,” the species widely considered to be the ancestor of modern man or Homo Sapien. Because dating on Homo Erectus was pushed back before the development of Acheulean tools, the Leakeys argued Homo Erectus must have initially used Mode 1 tools. In other words, there was no reason to think Mode 1 tools were strictly the province of Homo Habilis. This led to great arguments in the archeological community, although there is no debate that Homo

Habilis and Homo Erectus co-existed at the same time. Whether the tools in Primitive's collection come from man's earliest or next to earliest ancestors is immaterial, for there is no debate they provide real evidence of humankind's ingenuity, resourcefulness, and will to survive.



Framed collection of prehistoric knapped tools