

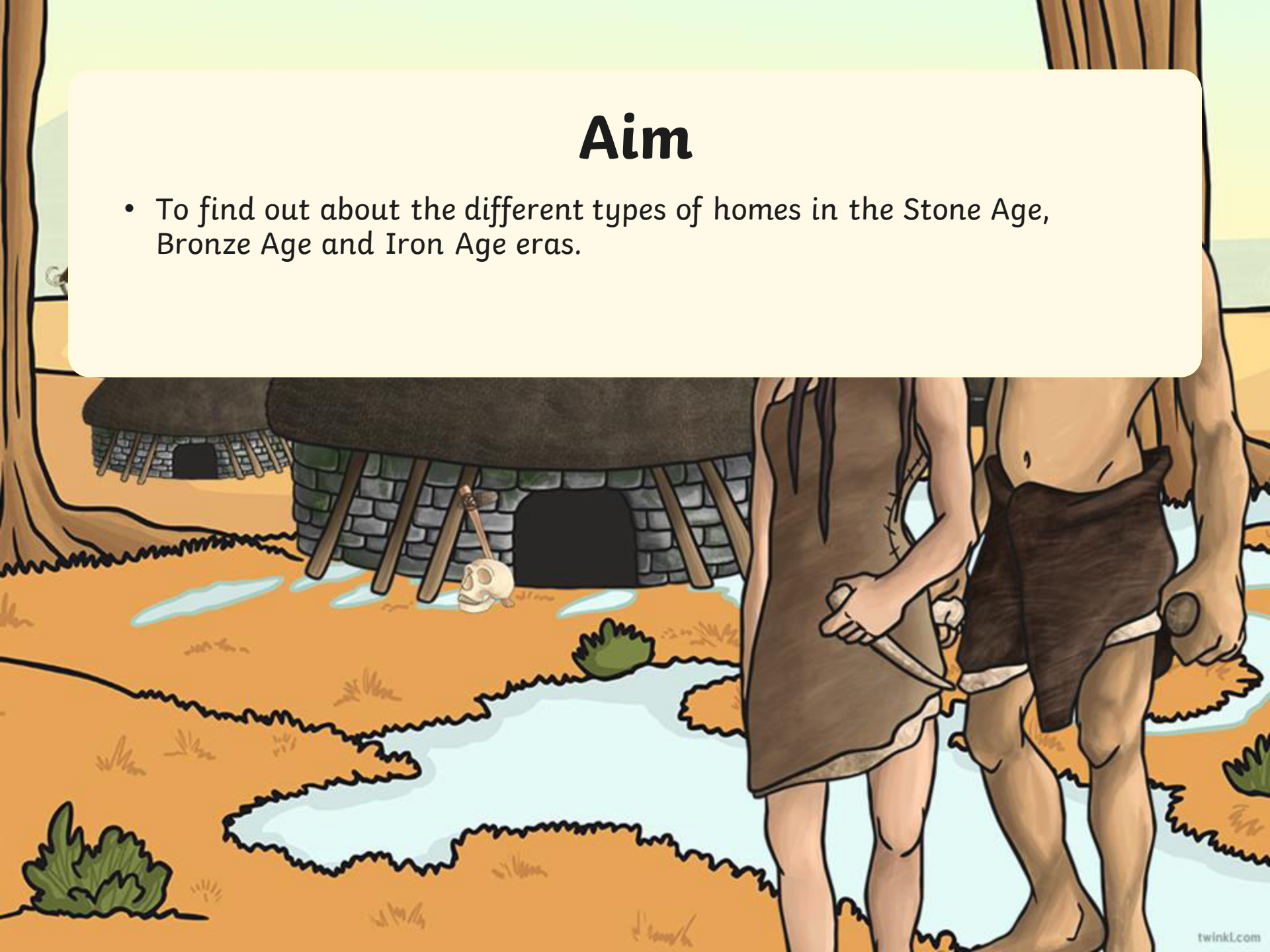
# Stone Age to Iron Age Houses



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# Aim

- To find out about the different types of homes in the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age eras.



# Prehistoric Times

There is a large period of time for which we have no written records – we call this 'prehistory'. Starting from evidence of the first early humans, it is split into three sections:

## The Stone Age

800 000BC



## The Bronze Age

2100BC



## The Iron Age

750BC



There is no recorded history of this time that we can read, just clues left behind, which archaeologists have to try to and interpret.

# Stone Age Houses

## Discuss

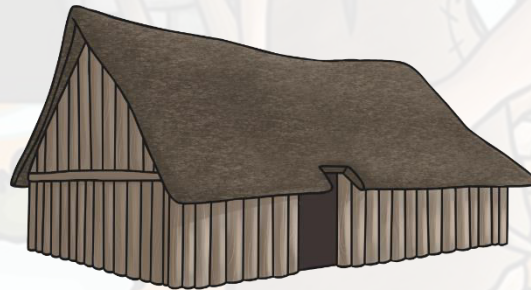
What shelter might early humans have found or made in Britain?  
What materials would they have had available?



# Stone Age Houses

In Britain, archaeologists have found evidence of four different types of Stone Age dwelling across the country.

What materials have been used to make each of these houses?



# Stone Age Houses

During the **Palaeolithic period** (around 800 000BC – 10 000BC), humans in Britain sheltered from ice and cold inside caves. These were ready-made houses for them to take shelter in quickly.



# Stone Age Houses

Evidence found from **Mesolithic times** (around 15 000BC) indicates a circular structure made from wooden posts.

There are no houses remaining, but archaeologists have found marks in the ground that they believe were made from timber poles.

The frame may have been round or conical, like a tepee.

They may have used animal skin, thatch or turf to cover the frame.

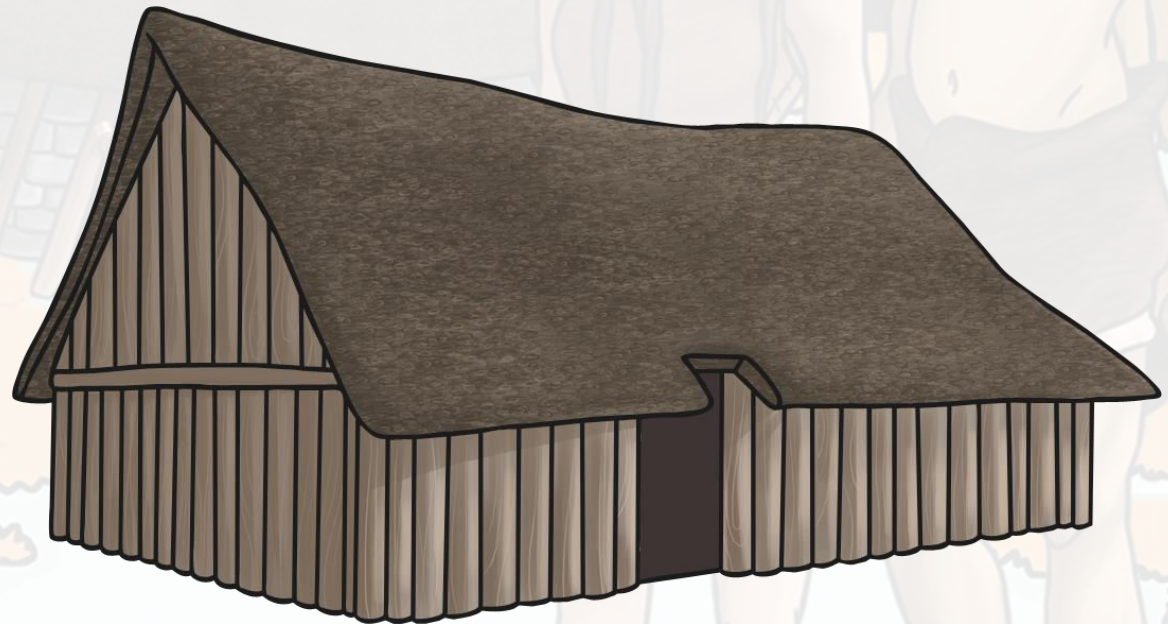
There was evidence to suggest that the floor was covered with a layer of moss, reeds and other soft plant materials.



# Stone Age Houses

During the Neolithic period (4000BC and 2500BC), Stone Age houses were rectangular and constructed from timber.

None of these houses remain but we can see the foundations. Some houses used **wattle** (woven wood) and **daub** (mud and straw) for the walls.



# Stone Age Houses

Other houses from the Neolithic period, like the ones uncovered at **Skara Brae**, were built from stone.

They were built into mounds of rubbish known as **midden**.

Midden could include small stones, shells, mud and animal bones.

It provided some stability as well as insulation.

These houses were usually round. They had beds, storage shelves and a hearth in the middle.

Roofs were made from materials such as straw, animal skins or turf laid over driftwood.



# Bronze Age Houses

The weather in Britain had become warmer and drier at the end of the Stone Age.

The Bronze Age (from 2100BC) saw another change in climate. The wetter weather forced people to move from the hills, which were easier to defend, in to the valleys, where it was easier to grow food and find shelter.

The spread of farming meant the end of large burial sites, as the fields were needed for animals to graze. Large areas of woodland started to be cut down to make more land available for farming.



# Bronze Age Houses

Bronze Age roundhouses were circular structures with a **wattle** (woven wood) and **daub** (mud and straw) wall or a dry stone wall. Some houses had to be built on stilts as they were constructed on wetlands.

Roundhouses usually had thatched roofs or were covered with turf that lay over a wooden cone of beams. They would have a fireplace in the centre of the house that would always be kept burning. The fire was important for cooking and keeping warm.



# Bronze Age Houses

In the Bronze Age, people no longer used one dwelling for everything.

A farming household might have consisted of two houses.

A main house would be used to live in and an outhouse used for cooking and textile production.



Do you think using more than one dwelling was a good change? Why?

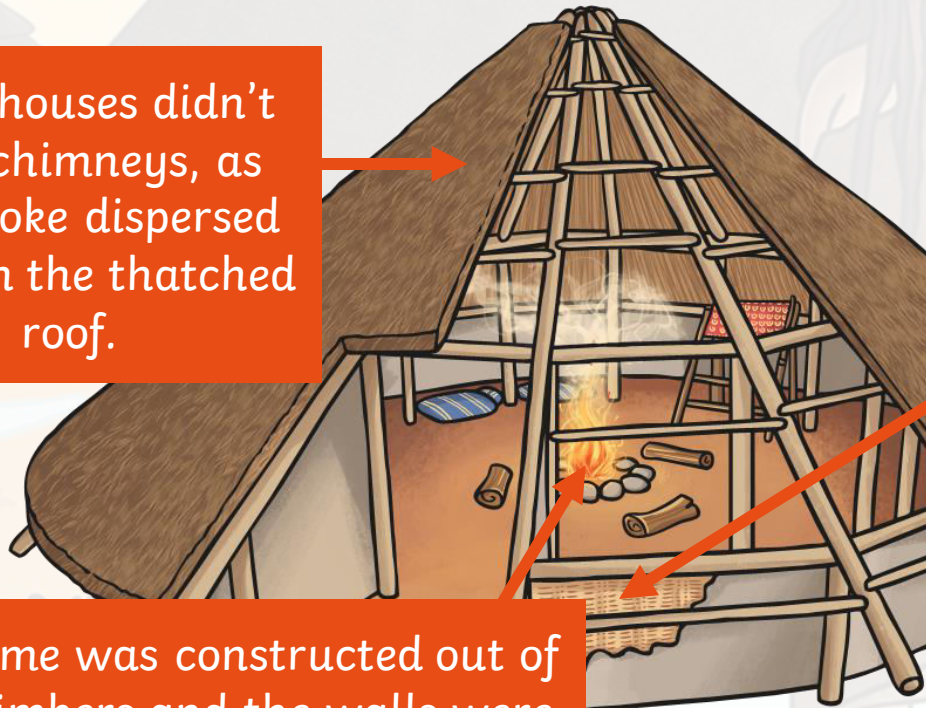
# Iron Age Houses

Archaeologists have discovered that typical Iron Age roundhouses were similar to Bronze Age houses. Some were very large and housed many people.

Roundhouses didn't have chimneys, as the smoke dispersed through the thatched roof.

In the centre of the house, there would have been a fire used for cooking and as a source of heat and light. Some roundhouses may have contained ovens for baking bread.

The frame was constructed out of large timbers and the walls were made from wattle and daub.



# Iron Age Houses

A big change in the Iron Age era was the development of **hill forts**. These were large settlements built on land higher than the surrounding area. They often had a ditch around the outside, for defence. A hill fort would be densely populated with a large number of roundhouses and roads.

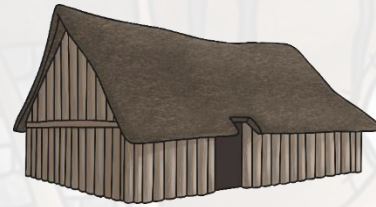
The first hillforts were constructed from around 800BC. One of the biggest hillforts in Europe was discovered in Maiden Castle, Dorset.



# Stone Age to Iron Age Houses

## Discuss

Would you like to live in a house from the Stone Age, Bronze Age or Iron Age?  
Why?





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