**Paleolithic versus Neolithic Era**

The **Paleolithic Era** (or **Old Stone Age**) is a period of prehistory from about 2.6 million years ago to around 10000 years ago. The **Neolithic Era** (or **New Stone Age**) began around 10,000 B.C.E. and ended between 4500 and 2000 BC in various parts of the world. In the Paleolithic era, there were more than one human species but only one survived until the Neolithic era. Paleolithic humans lived a nomadic lifestyle in small groups (hunters/gathers). They used primitive stone tools and their survival depended heavily on their environment and climate. Neolithic humans discovered agriculture and animal husbandry, which allowed them to settle down in one area. The Mesolithic era followed the Paleolithic era but the period of the Paleolithic—Mesolithic boundary varies by geography by as much as several thousand years.

**Comparison chart**

| Neolithic versus Paleolithic comparison chart |
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|  | **Neolithic** | **Paleolithic** |
| **Meaning** | Neo=new; Lithic=stone. Neolithic era is also call the New Stone age. | Paleo=old; Lithic=stone. The Paleolithic era is also called the Old Stone age. |
| **Dwelling** | Mud bricks supported by timber | Mouths of caves, huts, skin tents |
| **Lifestyle** | Sedentary....They farmed in permanent settlements and raised/herded animals; agriculture was discovered and became a major source of food; families evolved. | Nomadic; in groups of up to 50; tribal society; hunters and gatherers |
| **Tools** | polished stone tools made sharper by grinding | Chipped stone, wooden weapons, light stone tools (not sharpened) |
| **Clothes** | Animal skins, woven garments | Animal skins |
| **Governance** | Military and religious leaders had authority. Monarchy emerged. | Tribal society. Clan controlled by elders or the powerful (according to age) |
| **Economy** | The concept of private property and ownership emerged for things such as land, livestock and tools. | There was no concept of private property. |
| **Health** | Neolithic people were shorter and had lower life expectancy. Diseases like tooth cavities and typhoid emerged in the new stone age. Neolithic women had more children because the life style was no longer nomadic. | Paleolithic people were taller and lived longer than Neolithic people. |
| **Art** | Wall paintings | Cave paintings |
| **Sculpture material** | Stone, clay (baked) | Stone, mammoth ivory, reindeer horn |
| **Main Discovery** | Agriculture and tools with polished stones, the plow | Fire; Rough stone tools |
| **Food** | They grew crops such as corn, wheat, beans, etc. | Hunted and gathered for their food supply. |