

Early Hominids

Homo neanderthalensis

Characteristics:

- first early human fossils ever found
- closest extinct human relative
- large middle part of the face, angled cheek bones, and nose for humidifying and warming cold, dry air
- shorter and stockier bodies
- brains as large as and often larger than modern humans
- made and used sophisticated tools: controlled fire, lived in shelters, made and wore clothing
- occasionally made symbolic or ornamental objects
- deliberately buried dead and occasionally marked graves with offerings, such as flowers

Year of Discovery: 1829

Height: Males: average 5 ft 5 in; Females: average 5 ft 1 in

Weight: Males: average 143 lbs; Females: average 119 lbs

How They Survived:

- specialized seasonal hunters, ate plants

- big game animal remains hunted and butchered
- exploited marine resources such as mollusks, seals, dolphins and fish
- tools chipped down by removal of flakes off the surface.
- hunted with thrusting (rather than throwing) spears
- high frequency of fractures, like injuries among professional rodeo riders
- scrapers and awls (larger stone/ bone versions of sewing)

Evolutionary Tree Information:

- little direct interaction for tens of thousands of years with modern humans until during one very cold period, modern humans spread across Europe
- most recently dated Neanderthal fossils come from western Europe

Homo sapiens

Characteristics:

- gathered and hunted food
- evolved behaviors to respond to survival challenges
- lighter build of skeletons
- very large brains
- a thin-walled, high vaulted skull; flat, near vertical forehead
- smaller teeth.

Discovery: no particular *Homo sapiens* individual

Height: Males: average 5' 9"; Females: average 5' 4"

Weight: Males: avg. 172 lbs; Females: avg. 137 lbs

How They Survived:

- made, used, and specialized Prehistoric stone tools
- composite stone tools, fishhooks and harpoons, bows and arrows, spear throwers and sewing needles
- farming and herding animals
- settlements
- interaction with each other and surroundings
- broad social networks
- exchanged resources over wide areas
- created art, music, adornment, rituals, and symbols

Evolutionary Tree Information:

- did *not* evolve from any of the apes living today
- most likely evolved from *Homo heidelbergensis*, common ancestor shared with Neanderthals



Homo sapiens

Where Lived:

Evolved in Africa, now worldwide

When Lived:

About 200,000 years ago to present

Homo habilis

Characteristics:

- slightly larger braincase and smaller face and teeth than in older hominid species
- long arms & projecting lower jaw

Year of Discovery: 1960

Height: average 3 ft 4 in - 4 ft 5 in

Weight: average 70 lbs

How They Survived:

- thick tooth enamel
- strong jaws
- flexible and versatile diet, including some tougher foods like leaves, woody plants, and some animal tissues
- no routine eating of hard foods like brittle nuts or seeds, dried meat, or very hard tubers.
- butchery of large animals, direct evidence of meat and marrow eating

Evolutionary Tree Information:

- one of the earliest members of the genus *Homo*
- co-existed with *Homo erectus* in Eastern Africa for almost half a million years.

Homo erectus

Characteristics:

- with relatively elongated legs and shorter arms (modern human-like body proportions)
- lived on the ground, with the ability to walk and possibly run long distances
- expanded braincase relative to the size of the face
- cared for old and weak individuals
- used hand axes, the first major innovation in stone tool technology

Year of Discovery: 1891

Height: Ranges from 4 ft 9 in - 6 ft 1 in

Weight: Ranges from 88 - 150 lbs

How They Survived:

- honey and underground tubers may have been significant food sources
- earliest evidence of campfires

Evolutionary Tree Information:

- coexisted with *Homo rudolfensis*, *Homo habilis*, and *Paranthropus boisei*
- coexisted with *Homo sapiens* and possibly *Homo heidelbergensis*

Early Humans Chart

	When 1 st lived	When last lived	When 1 st discovered	Weight range	Height range
<i>Homo erectus</i>					
<i>Homo floresiensis</i>					
<i>Homo habilis</i>					
<i>Homo heidelbergensis</i>					
<i>Homo neanderthalensis</i>					
<i>Homo sapiens</i>					



Homo habilis

Nickname:
Handy Man

Where Lived:
Eastern and Southern Africa

When Lived:
2.4 million to 1.4 million years ago



Homo floresiensis

Nickname:
the Hobbit

Where Lived:
Asia

When Lived:
About 100,000 – 50,000 years ago



Homo neanderthalensis

Nickname: Neanderthal
(‘th’ pronounced as ‘t’)

Where Lived: Europe and southwestern to central Asia
When Lived: ≈400,000 - 40,000 years ago

Homo heidelbergensis

Characteristics:

- very large browridge
- larger braincase and flatter face than older early human species
- first early human species to live in colder climates
- oldest definite control of fire and use of wooden spears
- first early human species to routinely hunt large animals
- first species to build shelters, creating simple dwellings out of wood and rock

Year of Discovery: 1908

Height: Males: average 5 ft 9 in (175 cm); Females: average 5 ft 2 in

Weight: Males: average 136 lbs (62 kg); Females: average 112 lbs

How They Survived:

- capable of controlling fire by building early fireplaces (evidence found in Israel)
- first to build simple shelters
- first hunter of large game animals
- evidence of what may be human ritual: individuals deliberately thrown inside a pit.

Evolutionary Tree Information:

- includes early humans from Spain, England, Italy



Homo heidelbergensis

Where Lived:

Europe; possibly Asia; Africa

When Lived:

About 700,000 to 200,000 years ago

Homo floresiensis

Characteristics:

- more recently discovered early human species, found only on Island of Flores, Indonesia.
- made and used stone tools
- tiny brains
- large teeth for size
- shrugged-forward shoulders
- no chins
- receding foreheads
- relatively large feet due to their short legs
- coped with predators such as giant Komodo dragons
- may have used fire
- island dwarfism—from long-term isolation with limited food resources and lack of predators

Year of Discovery: 2003

Height: 3 ft 6 in - estimate from a female skeleton

Weight: 66 lbs - estimate from a female skeleton

How They Survived:

- selectively hunted *Stegodon* (extinct type of elephant)
- hunted small elephants and large rodents

Evolutionary Tree Information:

- debate over how *H. floresiensis* is related to other species in the genus (evolve from an earlier population of *H. erectus* or from a smaller species?)



Homo erectus

Where Lived:

Northern, Eastern, and Southern Africa;
Western Asia; East Asia

When Lived:

Between about 1.89 million and 143,000
years ago