

KNOWLEDGE NUGGETS



The Stones That Made Us

Researchers suggest that stone toolmaking co-evolved with human cognition and language

Link: <https://lab.sapienship.co/the-stones-that-made-us/>

Which of these artifacts
was made **by Homo sapiens**?



Other human species were making tools for millions of years before Homo sapiens came around. The earliest stone toolmaking had already developed at least 2.6 million years ago. Our ancestor's hands, wrists, and shoulders slowly evolved to work with stone better. In fact, we can say that while early humans made tools, tools also helped to make us.

And they didn't only shape our evolution material-wise; researchers suggest that human reliance on stone toolmaking and transmitting knowledge between individuals actually generated teaching abilities and language. There is experimental evidence that shows that imitation or emulation of stone toolmaking techniques does not improve the outcome over time. However, teaching with language shows significant improvement and produces better tools. One theory suggests that stone toolmaking co-evolved with human cognition. In that case, we owe stones much more than we can imagine (and maybe even how we imagine!).

Questions

1. If archaeologists 100,000 years from now try to understand our civilization, what kind of conclusions will they make from studying our trash?
2. What will future archeologists think about you, based on the contents of your home? (Think about the lifespan of different materials)
3. If stone toolmaking co-evolved with our physical and cognitive abilities, how does digital technology change us?