

GLOSSARY

A.D. - "Abbreviation for the term Anno Domini Nostri Jesu Christi (or simply Anno Domini) which means "in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ." Years are counted from the traditionally recognized year of the birth of Jesus. In academic, historical, and archaeological circles, A.D. is generally replaced by the term Common Era (C.E.)."

Absolute Dating - Collective term for techniques that assign specific dates or date ranges, in calendar years, to artifacts and other archaeological finds. Dates are determined by a variety of processes, including chemical analyses (as in radiocarbon dating and thermoluminescence), data correlation (as in dendrochronology), and a variety of other tests. See Relative Dating.

Acheulean - A stone tool industry, in use from about 1.6 million years ago until 125,000 years ago. It was characterized by large bifaces, particularly hand axes. This tool-making technology was a more complex way of making stone tools than the earlier Oldowan technology. More flakes were knocked off from both sides of a stone and there is evidence that the maker had a preconceived notion of the tool's final form.

Acropolis - The "high point" or citadel of an ancient Greek city, like the Acropolis in Athens. It is generally a raised area above the rest of the city where the most important sacred and secular buildings are brought together. The buildings on the Athenian Acropolis were important for trade and worship.

Aerial Photography - The various techniques of taking photographs of natural or cultural features from the air, using balloons, airplanes, satellites, and other sources, in order to study the features in their entirety from a top-down (bird's eye) view.

Aerial Reconnaissance - The technique of searching for sites and features, both cultural and natural, from the air, often using aerial photography or the human eye. This is a good way to search for patterns or changes in soil color or plant density (possible indicators of buried features) that may not be visible to a person walking on the ground.

Agora - An open-air place of congregation in an ancient Greek city, generally the public square or marketplace, that served as a political, civic, religious, and commercial center.

Alidade - An optical surveyor's instrument used in the field to create topographic maps and top plans. Today alidades are being replaced by Total Stations.

Alloy - A substance made by the mixture of two or more elements, at least one of which is a metal. Alloys are often stronger and more durable than pure metals. Bronze is an alloy of copper and either zinc or tin.

Alluvial Deposit - Soil deposited by running water, such as streams, rivers, and flood waters. Many ancient peoples, such as the Egyptians living along the Nile, depended on annual floods and alluvial deposits to replenish the soils they were farming. Alluvial soils are usually nutrient-rich and good for agriculture. In some instances, however, running water carries away nutrients

from exposed soils and creates areas unsuitable for agriculture.

Amphora - A two-handled pottery jar with a narrow neck used by the ancient Greeks and Romans to carry liquids, especially wine and oil.

AMS - Accelerator Mass Spectrometry is an absolute dating technique that measures the amount of carbon-14 in an organic object and provides a rough indication of its age.

Anthro - Of or relating to humans.

Anthropology - The study of human beings, including their behavior, biology, linguistics, and social and cultural variations. In the United States, anthropology is divided into four sub-disciplines: archaeology, biological/physical anthropology, cultural anthropology, and linguistics. All the sub-disciplines study aspects of past or present humans. Archaeologists generally study the physical and material remains of ancient societies, while cultural anthropologists study living cultures. Physical anthropologists study human skeletons and other bodily remains. Biological anthropologists deal primarily with the evolution of humans and primates. Linguists study languages, especially their development and their function within human culture.

Antiquarian - A term generally indicating a pre-20th-century collector of ancient artifacts before the development of scientific archaeology and the establishment of standards for excavating and preserving finds.

Archaeoastronomy - The study of ancient astronomical knowledge and its role in past cultures.

Archaeology - The scientific excavation and study of ancient human material remains.

Archaeozoology - The study of animal remains, usually bones, from the past. Also known as zooarchaeology.

Archaic - In archaeology, this term is often used to designate an early period in a culture's history. In Greece it designates the chronological period that preceded the classical period. In the New World the term refers to a period when permanent settlements were becoming more common and human groups were making the transition from hunting-and-gathering to agriculture. In evolutionary biology, an "archaic" Homo sapiens is a hominin (or hominid) who was slightly more primitive than modern humans (Homo sapiens).

Aristocracy - A governing body of upper class citizens or the system of government in which aristocrats (upper class citizens) have controlling power. In an aristocracy people are generally born into distinct social classes and there is little or no upward mobility.

Artifact - A portable object manufactured, modified, or used by humans.

Assemblage - A group of artifacts found within the same archaeological context (locus, matrix, and stratum).

Association - Objects found near one another in the same context are said to be in association.

B.C. - Abbreviation for the term Before Christ. Years are counted back from the traditionally recognized year of Christ's birth. In academic, historical, and archaeological circles, this term is now generally replaced by Before Common Era (B.C.E.).

B.C.E. - Before Common Era. See B.C.

B.P. - Before Present; used in age determination instead of B.C. or B.C.E. "Present" is academically defined as the year 1950 (the year when this term was invented).

Back dirt - The excavated, discarded material (sediment, dirt) from a site that has generally been sifted for artifacts and is presumed to be of no further archaeological significance. This material may later be used to refill test pits, an action referred to as "back filling."

Balk - A side wall of an excavated unit (square) or a partition of earth left standing between adjoining excavation units. Balks are often left to aid with stratigraphic analysis.

Benchmark - For excavation purposes, a permanent point at a known elevation that can be used to measure other elevations during excavation . Also known as a Datum Point.

Biface tools - Stone tools that have been worked on both sides or faces, meaning that flakes have been intentionally (not naturally) chipped off from both sides of the stone.

Boat grave - A type of burial in which a body (or cremated remains) is placed in a boat and buried in the ground. Such a burial often symbolized the deceased's high status.

Bronze Age - A prehistoric period in the Old World, dating roughly from 3000-1000 B.C.E, defined by the widespread use of bronze as a material for tools, weapons, and ornaments.

Bulb of percussion - A small, rounded protrusion on a flake resulting from the blow that separated the flake from its core or another flake.

Bulbar depression - A depression left on the core (where a flake's bulb of percussion was attached) when a blade or flake was struck off.

C.E. - Common Era. See A.D.

Cache (pronounced "cash") - A collection of objects that was purposefully buried.

Canopic vase or jar - A container or small jar used in ancient Egypt to hold the internal organs of a person who had been mummified. The lids were usually modeled to represent animal-

headed gods or the heads of important people.

Carbon dating - see Radiocarbon Dating

Cardinal Directions - Collective term for the four primary directions: North, South, East, West.

Ceramics - Objects, often pottery, made of fired or baked clay.

Chert - A fine-grained sedimentary rock, similar to flint, that is white, pinkish, brown, gray, or blue-gray in color. In antiquity, chert was one of the universally preferred materials for making stone tools (obsidian was another).

Chipped stone tool - Stone tool made by striking a stone (core or preform) with another stone (hammerstone) or other hard material (such as antler). Small pieces of stone (flakes) were struck off the core in a controlled and precise manner to create a usable shape (arrow heads, spear points, knives, etc.). The two main techniques of creating chipped tools were direct percussion (the core is struck directly with a hammerstone) and indirect percussion (another object is placed between the core and the hammerstone).

Citadel - A fortress, or stronghold, in or near a fortified city. The citadel was intended to command the city and its fortifications, but could also be used as a final point of defense into which people could retreat for shelter during battle.

City-state - An independent, self-governing city that incorporated its surrounding territory, including smaller towns and villages. Equivalent to a polis in ancient Greece.

Clan - A group of people from many lineages who live in one place and have a common line of descent, usually under one chieftain.

Classic Period - New World chronological period, traditionally thought to mark the initial appearance of urban states in Mesoamerica and the Andean region. Generally, A.D. 250-1000.

Classical Age - The period in history that encompasses the Greek and Roman civilizations.

Classical Archaeology - The study of the material culture and history of the Classical Age.

Classical Period - Period in ancient Greece encompassing the 5th century B.C.E., characterized by distinctive art and architecture.

Clovis Point - Large stone projectile point used by early American hunters to kill game animals.

Collectors - Individuals who acquire archaeological artifacts for private collections. While some objects are legally obtained, many are purchased from looters who destroy archaeological sites in their attempts to find artifacts. This destructive, unscientific approach strips an artifact of its context. The looted artifacts are often sold on the black market. Demand for privately-owned art

and artifacts fuels further looting.

Colonial Archaeology - In North America, defined as a division of Historical Archaeology concerned with European colonization of the New World and with interactions between native inhabitants, Europeans and Africans from about A.D. 1500 onwards.

Column - In architecture, a supporting pillar usually composed of a base, shaft, and surmounting capital. Often used for decorative as well as functional purposes. See also Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian.

Conchoidal - Relating to stone tools, the term conchoidal describes a specific type of fracture created when obsidian, chert, or glass-like substances are struck with a hard instrument and a flake is removed. The fracture pattern produces a flake that appears bent.

Conservation - A branch of archaeology that deals with the stabilization, preservation, repair, reconstruction, and general management of material culture and natural resources.

Context - The position and associations of an artifact, feature, or archaeological find in space and time. Noting where the artifact was found and what was around it assists archaeologists in determining chronology and interpreting function and significance. Loss of context strips an artifact of meaning and makes it more difficult (sometimes, impossible) to determine function.

Contract Archaeology - Archaeological research and excavation undertaken under contracts with the government or private organizations, designed to protect cultural resources in danger of destruction due to development. Contract archaeologists are often hired by construction companies to do salvage archaeology. See Salvage.

Coprolite - Fossilized excrement or feces.

Core - A chunk of stone from which flakes are removed. The core itself can be shaped into a tool or used as a source of flakes to be formed into tools.

Corinthian column - The most ornate of the three column styles (Doric, Ionic and Corinthian), Corinthian columns are essentially more elaborate Ionic columns. They are almost always fluted.

Cortex - The rough outer surface of a stone, usually removed to reveal the smooth interior during flint knapping (the making of stone tools).

Cultural Resource Management (CRM) - Profession that focuses on the management and preservation of cultural resources, such as archaeological sites or artifacts, protecting them for future generations.

Culture - A network of socially transmitted behaviors, beliefs, and ideas that separate humans into distinct groups. Culture directly affects the production of the material objects found at archaeological sites.

Cuneiform - The first system of writing in human history, developed in ancient Mesopotamia, which used a reed to impress wedge-shaped marks onto the surface of clay tablets.

Datum point - A specific, fixed location from which all measurements on a site are made or to which they are calibrated. See Benchmark.

Debitage - Small pieces of stone debris that break off during the manufacturing of stone tools. These are usually considered waste and are a by-product of production.

Dendrochronology - A type of absolute dating. The technique is based on the fact that trees add a ring of growth annually, and counting the rings gives the age of the tree. The rings vary in size depending on the conditions affecting trees in an area, so trees from the same region will have similar patterns of growth and can be matched with one other. When a tree ring pattern is recognized in timber, the age of that timber can be calculated and thus the approximate age of the feature or structure to which it belongs can be determined. This method was first widely used in the American Southwest.

Diffusion - The transmission of ideas or materials from culture to culture, or from one area to another.

Doric column - Tapering column, generally fluted, with a simple, squared capital and no base.

Ecofacts - Archaeological finds that are of cultural significance, but were not manufactured by humans. These include bones and vegetal remains that can tell us about past diet or environments.

Egyptology - The branch of archaeology that specializes in the study of Egyptian civilization.

Epigrapher - A person who studies ancient inscriptions.

Ethnography - A branch of anthropology that studies and describes modern human cultures (rather than human behavior or physical attributes). Archaeologists sometimes work with ethnographers in an effort to correlate behavior with material remains.

Excavation - The digging up and recording of archaeological sites, including uncovering and recording the provenience, context, and three-dimensional location of archaeological finds.

Experimental archaeology - A branch of archaeology that studies ancient technology by reproducing it or by recreating a type of site to study the processes of site formation.

Fabric - Term used to describe the composition of the clay used in the manufacture of a ceramic pot or artifact; it includes temper, texture, hardness, and other characteristics.

Feature - Any physical structure or element, such as a wall, post hole, pit, or floor, that is made or altered by humans but (unlike an artifact) is not portable and cannot be removed from a site.

Feminist archaeology - A branch of archaeology that focuses on collecting evidence of female social roles in past cultures and of women's influence in shaping societies.

Field notes - Detailed, written accounts of archaeological research, excavation, and interpretation made while in the field at an ongoing project.

Flake - A piece of stone removed from a core for use as a tool or as debitage.

Flexed burial - A body buried in the fetal position (curled on its side).

Flint - Hard, fine-grained sedimentary rock used by early humans to manufacture stone tools, such as spear and dart points, knives, and other utilitarian tools. Late stone-age people also struck flint to make sparks to produce fire.

Flotation - The soaking of an excavated matrix (usually dirt) in water to separate and recover small ecofacts and artifacts, such as pollen samples, that cannot be recovered through traditional sieving.

Formation processes - Human-caused or natural processes by which an archaeological site is modified during or after occupation and abandonment. These processes have a large effect on the provenience of artifacts or features found by archaeologists. Geological processes, disturbances by animals, plant growth, and human activities all contribute to site formation.

Geoarchaeology - Archaeological research using the methods and concepts of the earth sciences. Geoarchaeologists often study soil and sediment patterns and processes of earth formation observed at archaeological sites. This form of research provides a wealth of information about context and human activity.

Glaze - Special slip applied to pottery that produces, on firing, an impermeable, glossy surface.

Global Positioning System (GPS) - An instrument that determines (by triangulation) the location of features, using data from orbiting satellites.

Grave goods - Objects placed within human burials to equip a person for the afterlife or to identify the deceased.

Grid - A network of squares. A site or large area of excavation is generally marked off into square units before digging begins.

Ground Reconnaissance - The search for sites by visual inspection of the surface while on the ground (as opposed to in the air). See Surface Survey.

Ground-penetrating radar - An instrument used to find sub-surface anomalies (features) by recording differential reflection of radar pulses.

Half-life - The time needed for half of a radioactive isotope to decay and form a stable element. This known rate of decay is used in radiometric dating, such as radiocarbon dating, to determine the age of objects.

Harris Matrix - Invented in 1973 by Dr. Edward C. Harris as a way to simplify the representation of the stratigraphy at an archaeological site. In addition to traditional cross section drawings, Harris proposed that archaeologists create a flow chart (Harris Matrix) of a site to record the order in which layers and features occurred.

Hellenistic period - The era between the death of Alexander the Great (323 B.C.E.) and the rise of the Roman Empire (27 B.C.E.), when a fairly uniform civilization, based on Greek traditions, prevailed over most of the ancient world, from India in the east to Spain in the west.

Hieroglyphs - Ancient writing system consisting of pictographic or ideographic symbols; used in Egypt, Mesoamerica, and elsewhere.

Historical Archaeology - A discipline within archaeology concerned with supplementing written history with archaeological research to create a more complete account of the past. The term applies only to the study of societies with written records.

Hominid - This term was used in the past to describe the early humans called Hominins today. When the classification system changed to include apes in the human lineage (Hominidae), the term Hominid came to include apes and humans. Today, when talking about the human lineage and its ancestors, we use the term Hominin. Older publications that use the term Hominid are usually referring to the human lineage only.

Hominin - "Early human or pre-human beings: a member of the sub-family Homininae usually identified by bipedal adaptations. They are represented today by one species, Homo sapiens sapiens. Past Hominins include Australopithecines, Homo habilis and Homo erectus. See Hominid."

Household Archaeology - A branch of archaeology concerned with the study of the material culture and activities associated with ancient households.

Hunter-gatherers - A community or group that subsists primarily by hunting wild game and gathering wild plant resources. Hunter-gatherers usually live in small groups of less than 150 individuals.

Hypostyle - A building in which the roof or ceiling is supported by rows of columns.

Iconography - The system of using symbolic pictures, images, or figures to represent a subject or theme.

Ideogram - A pictorial symbol used to express a concept or idea.

in situ - Anything in its natural or original position or place is said to be in situ.

Inorganic - Composed of matter other than animal or plant, or not derived from living or once-living organisms.

Ionic column - Column surmounted by a capital with spiral coils on each side; the column shaft usually has more flutes and is more slender than the Doric column, and it has a decorative base.

Iron Age - The prehistoric period in the Old World that followed the Bronze Age, characterized by the use of iron implements in place of bronze tools.

Knapping - A technique for making stone tools and weapons by striking flakes from a core with a hard (stone) or soft (antler) percussion instrument. Individual flakes or cores can be further modified to create tools. Also called flintknapping.

Levallois technique - A tool-making technique that originated 200,000 years ago in which a prepared core was used to manufacture flakes of predetermined size and shape. Characteristic of Middle Paleolithic and Mousterian technologies.

Law of Superposition - A physical "law" asserting that deeper layers of sediment or archaeological strata will naturally be older than the layers above them (in the absence of unusual, disruptive, activity, such as earthquakes).

Linear A - An undeciphered writing system used in Minoan Crete from the 18th to the 15th century B.C.E.

Linear B - A syllabic script used in Mycenaean Greek documents, chiefly from Crete and Pylos, around the 13th century B.C.E.

Lintel - A horizontal block or beam spanning the top of a doorway or other opening. In other words, the top of a doorway.

Lithic - Of or pertaining to stone.

Locus - A specific point in space; a discrete excavated unit or archaeological context (plural = loci).

Looter - An individual who plunders archaeological sites to find artifacts of commercial value, thereby destroying the area of the site the objects came from and their archaeological context.

Material culture - Physical objects and structures from the past.

Matrix - The physical material (often dirt) in which archaeological objects are located.

Medieval Archaeology - In Europe, a field of Historical Archaeology concerned with the era between the Dark Ages and the Renaissance (11th - 14th centuries C.E.).

Mesolithic - The period between the Paleolithic (older) and the Neolithic (younger) Ages.

Microlith - Small, flaked stone tools, 1-4 cms in length.

Midden - A deposit of occupation debris, rubbish, or other by-products of human activity, such as shell, bone, or debitage, found close to a living area; a trash heap or pit.

Mousterian - The name given to a European stone-tool industry characterized by flakes struck from prepared cores, dating from about 150,000 until 35,000 years ago.

Neolithic - The latter portion of the Stone Age, a time period beginning around 10,000 B.C.E., when many areas were developing agriculture, especially the Middle East.

New World - Term used for the Americas (North, Central, South, and the neighboring islands) by Europeans in the 16th century who were discovering the region for the first time.

Nomads - Pastoralists; groups that move across a territory seasonally in search of food, water, and grazing grounds for livestock.

Obsidian - A glassy, volcanic rock, often black in color, was used in ancient times to produce extremely sharp blades. Obsidian blades can have an edge so sharp that they have been successfully used as scalpels in heart and eye surgery.

Old World - Regions of the world (Europe, Asia, Africa) known to Europeans before the discovery of the New World (Americas) by Christopher Columbus.

Oldowan - Name for the earliest stone tool industry, dating from about 2.6 million until 1.5 million years ago. Characterized by large tools with a sharp edge created by the removal, through direct percussion, of a few flakes (sometimes as few as 3) without much preconceived planning.

Oligarchy - Government by a few, usually wealthy, upper-class families.

Organic - Material derived from or relating to living organisms. Organic remains decay and are not preserved as well as inorganic remains in the archaeological record.

Osteology - The study of the structure and function of bones.

Paleobotany - Study of ancient plants from fossil remains and other evidence. Also called Paleoethnobotany.

Paleolithic - The early stage of the Stone Age, beginning about 750,000 years ago. During this time humans relied on stone technology to sustain their scavenging, hunting and gathering

lifestyle.

Paleontology - The study of the forms of pre-existing life as represented by the fossils of plants, animals, and other organisms.

Palynology - The recovery and study of ancient pollen grains for the purposes of analyzing ancient climate, vegetation, and diet.

Papyrus - A reed found in the Mediterranean region, and northern Africa, especially Egypt, used to make a type of paper.

Pedology - The scientific study of soils.

Petrology - The geological and chemical study of rocks.

Pictogram - A picture or symbol that represents a word or group of words.

Pithos - A large Greek pot used for storage of provisions.

Plane table - A horizontal board mounted parallel to the ground on a tripod, that allows a map or plan to be attached and measurements (taken with an alidade) to be directly plotted in the field.

Polis - A Greek city-state.

Prehistory - The period of human history preceding written records.

Pressure flaking - Technique of removing flakes from a core by applying pressure steadily until the flake breaks off, in contrast to percussion flaking, in which the flake is struck off.

Primary Context - The context of an artifact, feature, or site that has not been disturbed since its original deposition.

Profile - Profiles or cross-sections are the exposed views of an excavation's walls.

Profile drawing - Profile drawings or cross section drawings are drawn representations of the walls of an excavation unit or of a balk made as if one were standing directly in front of them. Each view may have a different profile or they may all look the same.

Provenance - The origin, or history of ownership of an archaeological or historical object.

Provenience - The three-dimensional context (including geographical location) of an archaeological find, giving information about its function and date.

Radiocarbon dating - An absolute dating technique used to determine the age of organic materials less than 50,000 years old. Age is determined by examining the loss of the unstable carbon-14 isotope, which is absorbed by all living organisms during their lifespan. The rate of

decay of this unstable isotope after the organism has died is assumed to be constant, and is measured in half-lives of 5730 + 40 years, meaning that the amount of carbon-14 is reduced to half the amount after about 5730 years. Dates generated by radiocarbon dating have to be calibrated using dates derived from other absolute dating methods, such as dendrochronology and ice cores.

Radiometric dating - A variety of absolute dating methods based on the rates of the transformation of an unstable radioactive isotope into a stable element.

Reconnaissance - A method of gathering data, often associated with surface surveys, in which archaeological remains are systematically identified and plotted on a map.

Relative dating - A system of dating archaeological remains and strata in relation to each other. By using methods of typing or by assigning a sequence based on the Law of Superposition, archaeologists organize layers or objects in order from "oldest" to "most recent." Relative dating methods help archaeologists establish chronologies of finds and types.

Remote sensing - Non-intrusive survey methods used to find archaeological sites; these may include aerial reconnaissance and geophysical techniques such as magnetometry, radar, resistivity, and conductivity.

Rescue Archaeology - The swift excavation and collection of artifacts at sites in immediate danger of destruction, usually by major land modification or construction projects (as in construction of a road or dam). Archaeologists record and recover as much of the site as they can in the brief period before it is destroyed. Also known as Salvage Archaeology.

Salvage Archaeology - See Rescue Archaeology.

Secondary Context - Context of an artifact that has been wholly or partially altered by transformation/site formation processes after its original deposit, as in disturbance by human activity after the artifacts' original deposition.

Sediments - Soils that have been transported over distances and have accumulated in a new area.

Seriation - The organization of artifacts, monuments, types, and styles into groups assumed to be distinct and representative of chronological change.

Settlement pattern - Distribution of human settlements on the landscape.

Shaman - A specialist in certain societies who acts as a medium between the visible world and the spirit world, practicing magic or sorcery for purposes of healing, divination, and control over natural events.

Sherd - The term used for a piece of broken pottery from an archaeological context. Also called a shard.

Site - Any place where human material remains are found; an area of human activity represented by material culture.

Slip - In ceramics, a dilute clay solution used for coating pottery, usually as decoration.

Soils - Deposits that form in place from the weathering of (parent) material.

Square - In archaeology, this term refers to subdivisions of a site or a larger excavation unit. The subdivisions are small regular units often square or rectangular in shape. A continuous network of squares is called a grid.

Stela or stele (plural stelae or stele) - A slab or column of stone, often decorated with carvings or inscriptions, erected at a site for ceremonial or historical purposes.

Stone Age - A period when humans used stone as the primary material for making tools. See also Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic.

Stratigraphy - The study of the layers (strata) of sediments, soils, and material culture at an archaeological site (also used in geology for the study of geological layers).

Style - Characteristics of appearance used to classify objects into groups. Style helps to identify cultural and chronological changes and connections.

Stylus - A sharpened, wooden implement with a wedge-shaped tip used for making cuneiform inscriptions. Also, a pointed tool used by the Romans for writing on wax tablets.

Surface Survey - The process of searching for archaeological remains by physically examining the landscape, usually on foot. There are many different types of survey techniques. See Ground Reconnaissance.

Tell - A mound, especially in the Middle East, made up of the stratified remains of a succession of settlements. When structures of a later period of occupation are built directly on top of an earlier layer, over time a settlement becomes raised above the landscape due to the buildup of layers.

Temper - Coarse material, such as crushed shells or sand, added to clay to get a desired texture or consistency for making a pot or other artifact.

Terminus ante quem - Date before which something cannot have been constructed or deposited.

Terminus post quem - Date after which something cannot have been constructed or deposited.

Test pit - An excavation unit used in the initial investigation of a site or area, before large-scale excavation begins, that allows the archaeologist to "preview" what lies under the ground.

Thermoluminescence (TL) - A radiometric dating technique in which the amount of light energy released when heating a sample of pottery or sediment is measured as an indicator of the time since it was last heated to a critical temperature.

Three age system - Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age: devised by Christian Thomsen in the early 19th century to organize artifacts chronologically and enhance museum displays, the system is based on the idea of technical progression of materials used in prehistory.

Total Station - An optical surveyor's instrument that combines a transit and an electronic distance measuring device. A total station calculates angles and distances for surveyed objects. This information can be used to create topographic maps.

Transit - A surveying instrument used to measure vertical and horizontal angles and distances.

Tree rings - Growth rings formed annually in a tree's trunk, which often reflect the conditions in which the tree grew. Thicker rings are indicative of a good growing season with ideal temperatures and sufficient rain. See Dendrochronology.

Trench - Term sometimes used to refer to an excavation unit, especially when the length is longer than the width.

Tufa - Solidified volcanic ash. Also known as tuff.

Tumulus - A large, earthen mound built above a tomb or grave.

Type - In archaeology, a grouping of artifacts identified as distinct or created for comparison with other groups. This grouping may or may not coincide with the actual types or groups designed by the original manufacturers.

Typology - The study and chronological arrangement of artifacts, such as ceramics or lithics, into different types based on associating similar characteristics. Typing makes a high volume of samples easier to study and compare.

Underwater archaeology - The study of archaeological sites and shipwrecks that lie beneath the surface of the water. This is a dangerous form of archaeology and is often conducted with the aid of mechanized tools that can be operated remotely.

Uniface tools - Tools or points that are worked or knapped on only one side or face.

Use-wear analysis - Microscopic analysis of artifacts or bones to find wear patterns or damage marks that indicate how the artifact was used. For example, marks running perpendicularly to the edge of a stone knife could indicate that the tool was used for scraping rather than cutting. Also called wear analysis.

Varves - Annual clay deposits made by retreating and melting glaciers, used to measure recent geological events; may be used for relative dating.

Ware - Types of ceramics; may refer to function, appearance/style, or fabric (as in cooking ware, ribbed ware, and coarse ware).

Ziggurat - A rectangular, tiered or terraced structure of varying heights that served as a platform for temples in ancient Mesopotamia -- an area that was home to the Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and other ancient cultures.

Zone - In archaeology, a term used to refer to a stratigraphic level within an excavation.

Reference:

<https://www.archaeological.org/education/glossary>