Iron age fact file

Read the information below all about the Iron Age. Do you notice any similarities and differences between the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age?



 What was the Iron Age?

'The Iron Age' is the name given to the time period (from 500 BC to 43 AD in Britain) where **iron became the best choice of metal for making tools**. In Europe, The Iron Age marks the end of prehistoric times after the [Stone Age](https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/the-stone-age) and the [Bronze Age](https://www.theschoolrun.com/homework-help/the-bronze-age).



Facts

1. Iron was tougher than bronze and could be shaped into finer and sharper objects. It required **smithing** (heating and hammering) to make into tools and implements.
2. The **making of** and **trading** of bronze had required special skills and made the people who used these skills wealthy and powerful. Iron was more available than bronze and was easier to use.
3. Iron ploughs called **ards** were more efficient than earlier bronze or wooden ploughs. This meant they could till heavier soils so more land could be used for farming.
4. As farming became more productive the population began to rise.
5. One of the best and time-saving inventions of the Iron Age was the **rotatory quern** which was used for grinding grain to make flour. The grain was placed between two circular stones and the top stone was turned or rotated using a handle.
6. The **diets** people ate, the **houses** they lived in and the **customs** they followed varied depending on which part of the country they inhabited.
7. Most Iron Age people **worked and lived on small farms** and their lives were guided by the changing of the seasons.
8. Grain was stored in **granaries** or in underground **vaults**. Meat or fish could be preserved by salting or smoking.
9. By the end of the Iron Age many people lived in hill forts. The forts were surrounded by **walls** and **ditches** and warriors defended their people from enemy attacks.
10. Inside the hill forts, families lived in round houses. These were simple one-roomed homes with a pointed thatched roof and walls made from **wattle and daub** (a mixture of mud and twigs). In the centre of a round house was a fire where meals were cooked in a cauldron. Around the walls were jars for storing food and beds made from straw covered with animal skins.