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STONEHENGE FACT SHEET C



Stonehenge is a very famous stone circle in the South of England that was started in the Stone Age and continued in the Bronze Age. They started by digging a circular ditch that was 100 metres across using picks made from antlers. There were two entrances to the circle. There were 56 pits dug around it, 1 metre deep, with flat bottoms.

They could have held timber posts, or stones, or might have been part of a religious ceremony.



Photos courtesy of The Stonehenge Stone Circle Website and dannysullivan (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons license - attribution.



The second stage saw 82 stones added in a double circle pattern. These stones came all the way from South Wales, 240 miles away! They were called bluestones because they looked blue if they were broken or wet. The stones were around 2 metres tall and over 1 m wide.

About 500 years later more stones were added. The Sarsen stones were enormous, over 4 metres high, 2 metres wide and weighing up to 30 tonnes. An outer circle was created, with stones laid horizontally across the top.

In the middle, more stones were arranged in a horseshoe shape. At the centre was a stone called the Altar Stone.

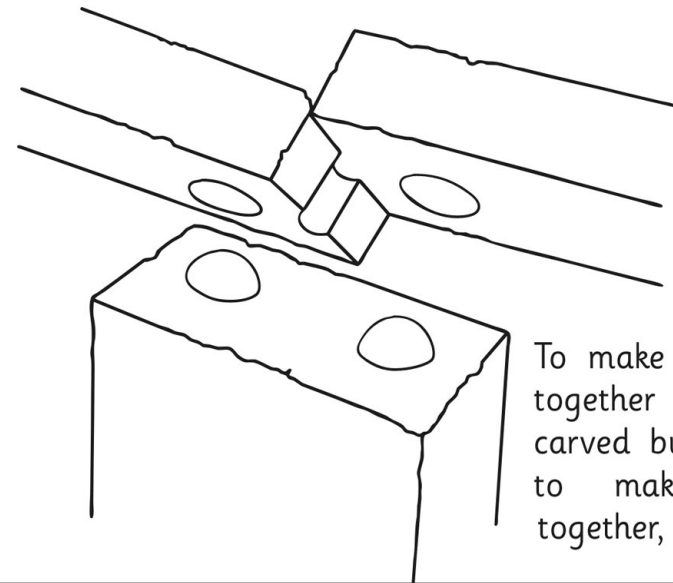
During the final changes the original bluestones were rearranged in the horseshoe and circle shape that can be seen today.



STONEHENGE FACT SHEET C



There is one stone that looks red when it gets wet because there is iron in the rock. The Victorians called this the Slaughter Stone.



To make the stones fit together well, they carved bumps and holes to make them fit together, a bit like Lego!

The stones are very carefully lined up so you can see the sunrise at midsummer and sunset at midwinter at opposite ends of the circle.

It could have taken 600 men to move each massive stone by pulling on ropes over a line of logs.

They lifted the stones by sliding them into holes and using large wooden frames and ropes to pull them up in the right direction.

They carved pictures of axe-heads and daggers on some of the Sarsen stones.

