

TABLE 7.4 Major Time Frames in Archaeology

TIME FRAME	DESCRIPTION
Lower Paleolithic	From about 2.5 million years ago to about 250,000 years ago; rarely applied outside of Africa, Asia, and Europe
Middle Paleolithic	From about 250,000 years ago to about 30,000 years ago; rarely applied outside of Africa, Asia, and Europe
Upper Paleolithic	From about 30,000 years ago to about 11,000 years ago; not commonly used outside of Europe
Mesolithic	From about 11,000 years ago to about 9,000 years ago; not commonly used outside of Europe
Neolithic	From about 9,000 years ago to about 5,000 years ago; not commonly used outside of Europe
Bronze Age	From about 5,000 years ago to about 3,000 years ago; not commonly used outside of Europe
Iron Age	From about 3,000 years ago to about 2,000 years ago; not commonly used outside of Europe
Paleoindian	From about 12,000 years ago to 8,000 years ago; application is restricted to the Americas