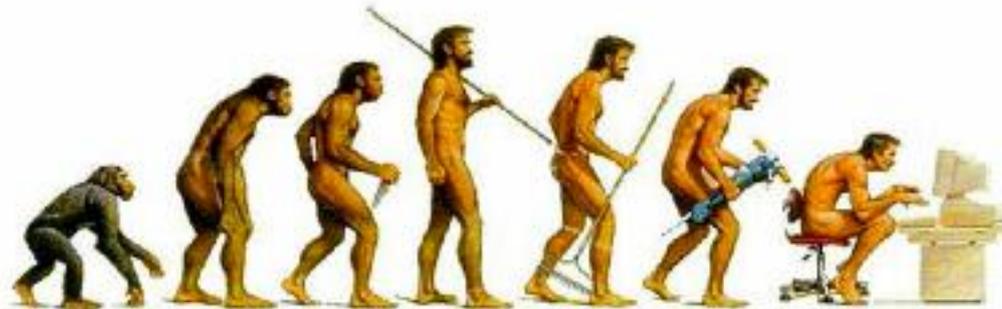


Apes Human Evolution - From Apes to Humans

302 Administrator Mon, Feb 8, 2010 [Encyclopedia](#) 0 6848

What are Primates?



Primates are a group of mammals that includes apes, monkeys and humans. The first primates lived on Earth about 50 million years ago, but they looked rather like squirrels. Over millions of years, different kinds of primates evolved. Between 20 and 10 million years ago, giant apes were common in Africa.

Who were the Neanderthals?

The Neanderthals were an ancient human species that lived in Europe and Asia from about 300,000 to 30,000 years ago, when they became extinct. Long ago, there were other human species, but all of these died out. One was *Homo erectus*, perhaps our earliest human ancestor. *Homo erectus* first appeared almost two million years ago and died out 100,000 years ago.

How did the first people live?

The first people depended on wild plants and animals for food. They used sharp sticks to spear animals or knock them from trees. Their use of tools and their ability to work together were two of the things that made early humans so successful. These early hunters may even have driven some kinds of prehistoric animals to extinction.

Did you know?

Bodies of humans that died as long as 2300 years ago have been found perfectly preserved in peat bogs. These remains can tell us a great deal about how people lived long ago.

Why did people start farming?

Prehistoric people probably started farming because it was easier than traveling a long way to chase wild animals or gather berries and nuts. As people settled in one place, the first villages and towns developed. Around 5000 years ago, people began to read and write. This was the end of the prehistoric period because people started to write down their history.

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