

Tools

Strike-a-Light

The strike-a-light worked by striking a piece of flint against the metal to make a spark. The warmth of the longhouse fire was very important. The Vikings cooked their food using a fire in the centre of the room, which also heated the entire house.

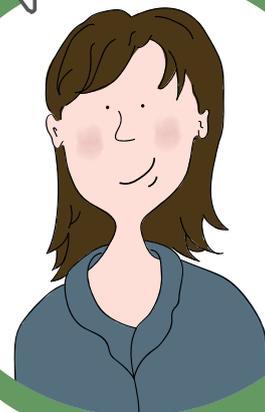
The fire was usually placed in a stone hearth and there was a small hole in the roof of the house for the smoke to escape. The floor was covered with straw or reeds. They did not have windows, only small openings in the walls. The walls were covered with animal skins to keep out the wind and rain.



Did You Know

Fire was just as important in the blacksmith's forge as in the longhouse. The skilled Viking blacksmith would make and repair tools and weapons from iron and steel made molten by the heat of the forge.

This highly decorative bronze strike-a-light was found on the Isle of Man. Trace the pattern with your finger.



Tools

Whetstone

Metal objects were sharpened in Viking times by using a whetstone. These long stones were an essential part of a Viking's toolkit. Some stones could be traded and transported over long distances, as they were particularly effective in sharpening, axes, scissors knives and arrows.



Think 

How do you think this tool works to sharpen metal objects?

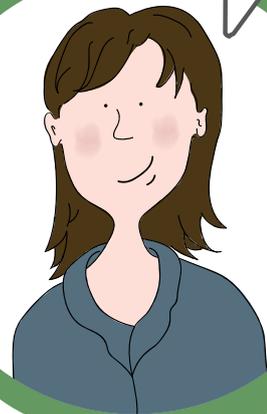
It is very heavy!

A whetstone was discovered at the Balladoole ship burial so may have been a prized object.

Explore 
more

The Balladoole Viking ship burial was first excavated in 1945 by Gerard Bersu, a German Internee.

Why not research more about Gerard Bersu and his excavations?



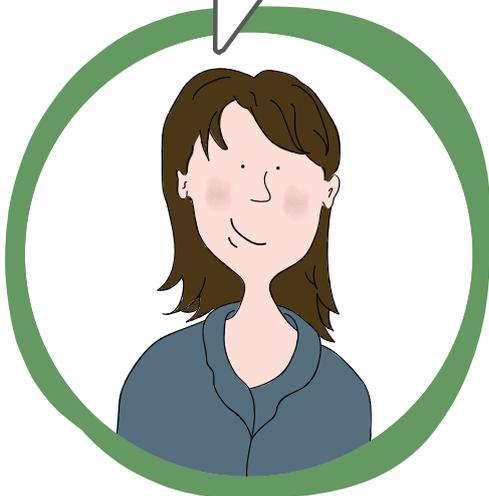
Tools

Horn Spoon

Viking people were skilled in making useful household items from bone, antler and cow horn. The bony horn core was discarded, but the remaining material could be sawn, heated, flattened, cut to shape and polished. Thin sections are translucent, so could be used to make lanterns. The versatility of horn meant that it was a little like a Viking era equivalent of plastic. Spoons were a common end product of working in horn. They are much like the spoons with which we are familiar today.



Did you know...
Vikings didn't have forks!
They used only spoons,
knives and their fingers
to eat with.



See 

Thin sections of horn are translucent, so could be used as window panes in small window openings or to make lanterns.

Think 

What do you think would happen if you immersed your horn spoon in a hot liquid like soup?

They can become soft and bendy!

Tools

Horn Cups

These Viking cups have been made from cow horn. Feasting and drinking ale together was an important part of Viking social life. Drinking vessels came in various shapes and sizes, ranging from wooden cups to silver bowls.

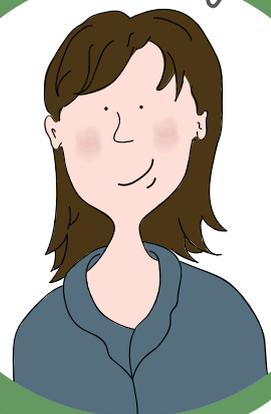
These hollowed horn cups would have been used for ceremonial drinking in feasts and celebrations. The hollowed horn cups could not be put down on a table, as it would spill.



Did you know...
As well as beer, Vikings drank mead which is an alcoholic drink made with honey and fruit wine.

Think

This horn cup has a wooden base and a curved handle. How do you think this cup was made?



Textiles

Viking women and girls used spindles to spin thread from wool. They were skillful at weaving fine cloth. They used bone needles to sew cloth and leather. They decorated cloth with fine embroidery. Wool was a very important material and was used to make warm clothes and the sails that powered the long ships!



Stone Spindle
Whorl



Woven Belt



Bone
Needles

Did you know that the Manx four-horned sheep is known as the Loghtan? This rare breed of Manx sheep is thought to date back to Viking times.

A fragment of a Viking cloak discovered at Cronk Mooar, was made from Loghtan wool. You can see the fragment of material when visiting the Manx Museum.

