

Stonehenge

Stonehenge is a circular stone monument near Salisbury in southern England. It was probably built at the beginning of the Bronze Age, around 3,000 BC. The oldest part of the site consisted of a circular earthen wall and a ditch. The stones that make the monument so famous to this day were added several centuries later.

Stonehenge consists of two different types of stone: volcanic bluestone and sarsenstone, a hard sandstone. The stones had to be transported sometimes very long distances to the site. The largest of them were up to 7 metres high and weighed up to 45 tonnes. So transporting them was very arduous work. Researchers assume that people at that time used sledges made of tree trunks for transport. The monument had a very closed character. In total, more than 170 stones were used and placed in several large circles. Inside, large stones were arranged in a horseshoe shape. Inside the horseshoe stood an altar stone. This suggests that the monument was used for ritual purposes.

Many different theories and legends surround the use of Stonehenge. There are no exact findings. The monument is often described as a Druid sanctuary. However, the time of the English Druids did not begin until after the construction of the site. Stonehenge is also said to have played a role in the famous Arthurian legend. It is reported that the wizard Merlin had the stones brought from Ireland to England because they were said to have a healing effect. It is also assumed that the stone formation served astronomical purposes, for example to determine the phases of the moon, which were used to calculate sowing and harvesting times. To this day, Stonehenge attracts a particularly large number of visitors at the summer and winter solstices.

Today, only a small part of the entire site can still be seen. The horseshoe and one of the inner circles are still visible. This model depicts Stonehenge as it probably once looked.