

# HOW DID WE BECOME HUMAN?



125 million years ago

Earliest placental mammal is dated and resembles a rodent



5-6 million years ago

Earliest prehuman bipedal fossil (agreed upon by most) is *Orrorin tugenensis*



4 million years ago

Later came *Australopithecus afarensis*, the ancestor of the *Homo* genus



2.5 million years ago

Some *Australopithecus* evolved into the first humans, *Homo habilis*, who developed stone tool technology



1.9 million years ago

*Homo habilis* evolved into *Homo erectus*, who learned how to domesticate fire



1 million years ago

From *Homo erectus* evolved *Homo heidelbergensis*, the common ancestor of both Neanderthals and *Homo sapiens*



400,000 – 200,000 years ago

Neanderthals first appeared in Africa and, at their peak, lived throughout Europe and south-western Asia



200,000 years ago

The modern human, *Homo sapiens*, emerged, living alongside Neanderthals for at least 12,000 years



60,000 – 40,000 years ago

*Homo sapiens*' diet expanded to include different types of meat, fish, and grain (which was ground into flour), and long distance trade routes were established



Ornamentation, musical instruments, and cave art appeared in the 'Upper Paleolithic Revolution'

40,000 years ago

Neanderthals became extinct, coinciding with *Homo sapiens*' arrival in Europe – the age of the modern human had begun



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## SOURCES

**How Life Began:** Evolution's Three Geneses (*University of Chicago Press*) | **The Evolved Apprentice:** How Evolution Made Humans Unique (*The MIT Press*) | **Evolution and Religious Creation Myths:** How Scientists Respond (*Oxford University Press*) | **Darwinian Detectives:** Revealing the Natural History of Genes and Genomes (*Oxford University Press*) | **How Homo Became Sapiens:** On the Evolution of Thinking (*Oxford University Press*)