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# UGC NET Paper 2

Archaeology (067)
Complete revision notes — all 10 units

10 units | Tables & formulas | Key revision points


01 Archaeology: Definition and History
02 Methods of Excavation
03 Dating Methods
04 Prehistoric India
05 Harappan Civilisation
06 Chalcolithic and Iron Age Cultures
07 Historical Archaeology
08 Epigraphy and Numismatics
09 Art and Architecture in Archaeology
10 Theory in Archaeology



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Edition: November 2026

CONTENTS

# What's inside

Ten units of focused revision notes. Each unit ends with a box of key revision points.


01 **Archaeology: Definition and History** — Scope of archaeology and its development in India. 3

02 **Methods of Excavation** — Exploration, excavation and recording. 4

03 **Dating Methods** — Relative and absolute dating. 5

04 **Prehistoric India** — Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic cultures. 6

05 **Harappan Civilisation** — Phases, sites and features. 7

06 **Chalcolithic and Iron Age Cultures** — Post-Harappan copper-using and iron-using cultures. 8

07 **Historical Archaeology** — Early historic cities and settlements. 9

08 **Epigraphy and Numismatics** — Inscriptions and coins as sources. 10

09 **Art and Architecture in Archaeology** — Stupas, rock-cut caves and temples. 11

10 **Theory in Archaeology** — Processual, post-processual and underwater archaeology. 12


### How to use these notes

- Read one unit at a time, then test yourself with its key revision points.
- Make your own short notes on topics you find difficult.
- Units follow the main areas of the official syllabus — the exact unit list can change between sessions.
- Always check the latest syllabus and notices on the official UGC NET portal: **ugcnet.nta.ac.in**.

UNIT 01

# Archaeology: Definition and History

Scope of archaeology and its development in India.

- Archaeology studies the human past through material remains.
- Asiatic Society (1784, William Jones); **ASI founded 1861** (Alexander Cunningham).
- John Marshall (DG) — announced the Indus civilisation (1924); Mortimer Wheeler — grid/box method, stratigraphic excavation.

### ★ Key revision points

- ASI: 1861, Cunningham.
- Indus civilisation announced 1924.
- Grid method = Wheeler.
- Asiatic Society: 1784.

UNIT 02

# Methods of Excavation

Exploration, excavation and recording.

- Exploration: surface survey, remote sensing, geophysical survey.
- Excavation: vertical (sequence) and horizontal (layout of a settlement); trial trench, quadrant method (mounds).
- **Stratigraphy** — law of superposition; Harris matrix.

### ★ Key revision points

- Vertical excavation gives sequence.
- Horizontal excavation shows layout.
- Superposition: lower is older.
- Harris matrix records stratigraphy.

UNIT 03

# Dating Methods

Relative and absolute dating.

| Method | Basis / range |
|---|---|
| **Stratigraphy, typology** | Relative dating |
| **Radiocarbon (C-14)** | Organic remains; half-life ~5,730 years; up to ~50,000 years |
| **Dendrochronology** | Tree rings |
| **Thermoluminescence** | Pottery, burnt material |
| **Potassium–argon** | Volcanic rocks; very old dates |

### ★ Key revision points

- C-14 half-life ≈ 5,730 years.
- Dendrochronology = tree rings.
- TL dates pottery.
- K–Ar for very old volcanic layers.

UNIT 04

# Prehistoric India

Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic cultures.

- Lower Palaeolithic: Acheulian (handaxes) — Attirampakkam, Isampur; Sohanian (Soan valley).
- Middle Palaeolithic (flakes); Upper Palaeolithic (blades).
- Mesolithic: microliths — Bagor, Adamgarh, Bhimbetka rock art.
- Neolithic: Mehrgarh, Burzahom (pit dwellings), Chirand.

### ★ Key revision points

- Acheulian = handaxes.
- Microliths = Mesolithic.
- Pit dwellings = Burzahom.
- Mehrgarh = early farming.

UNIT 05

# Harappan Civilisation

Phases, sites and features.

- Phases: early, mature (c. 2600–1900 BCE), late.
- Sites: Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Lothal, Kalibangan, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Banawali.
- Features: planned towns, drainage, standard bricks (1:2:4 ratio), seals, weights.

### ★ Key revision points

- Mature Harappan: c. 2600–1900 BCE.
- Brick ratio 1:2:4.
- Dholavira: Gujarat, UNESCO site.
- Lothal = dockyard.

UNIT 06

# Chalcolithic and Iron Age Cultures

Post-Harappan copper-using and iron-using cultures.

- Chalcolithic: Ahar–Banas, Kayatha, Malwa, Jorwe (Inamgaon, Daimabad).
- Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP), Copper Hoards.
- Painted Grey Ware (PGW) — Ganga plains; Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) — second urbanisation.
- South Indian megaliths.

### ★ Key revision points

- Jorwe culture: Maharashtra.
- PGW linked to later Vedic period.
- NBPW = second urbanisation.
- Megaliths = burial monuments.

UNIT 07

# Historical Archaeology

Early historic cities and settlements.

- Second urbanisation in the Ganga valley (c. 6th century BCE).
- Sites: Kaushambi, Rajgir, Taxila, Arikamedu (Indo-Roman trade).

### ★ Key revision points

- Arikamedu = Indo-Roman trade.
- Taxila = Gandhara city.
- Second urbanisation: Ganga valley.
- Kaushambi = Vatsa capital.

UNIT 08

# Epigraphy and Numismatics

Inscriptions and coins as sources.

- Scripts: Brahmi (deciphered by James Prinsep, 1837), Kharosthi (right to left).
- Coins: punch-marked (earliest), Indo-Greek (portraits), Kushana gold, Gupta gold dinars.

### ★ Key revision points

- Brahmi deciphered by Prinsep, 1837.
- Kharosthi is written right to left.
- Punch-marked coins are earliest.
- Gupta gold coins = dinars.

UNIT 09

# Art and Architecture in Archaeology

Stupas, rock-cut caves and temples.

- Stupas: Sanchi, Bharhut, Amaravati.
- Rock-cut caves: Barabar (Mauryan), Ajanta, Ellora.
- Temple styles: Nagara, Dravida, Vesara.

### ★ Key revision points

- Barabar caves = Mauryan.
- Sanchi = stupa.
- Ellora = rock-cut temples.
- Three temple styles.

UNIT 10

# Theory in Archaeology

Processual, post-processual and underwater archaeology.

- New / processual archaeology — Lewis Binford (scientific, hypothesis-testing).
- Post-processual archaeology — Ian Hodder (meaning, interpretation).
- Underwater archaeology in India — S. R. Rao (Dwarka).

### ★ Key revision points

- Processual = Binford.
- Post-processual = Hodder.
- Underwater archaeology = S. R. Rao.
- New archaeology = scientific method.

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