

BTTP Resources — Vocabulary

Archaeology

The scientific study of people from the past through analysis of their material remains, such as, artifacts, irrigation canals and pit houses.

Arrowheads, spear points and tools

Implements made of stone and used for hunting, cutting and digging.

Artifact

Any object made by humans.

Ball Court

A playing field for games or ceremonies.

Bedrock mortar

A round polished hole in a large rock formation used as the lower stone for grinding substances. Mesquite pods ground in bedrock mortars using a small hand-held rock as the upper stone (pestle) becomes flour to be eaten raw or used in cakes or stews.

Check Dam

A barrier built across a small, usually dry waterway to collect rainwater and prevent soil from being washed away (erosion).

Drought

A period of dry weather that injures crops.

Fetishes

Human and animal figurines made of clay, believed to have magical powers to protect their owners.

Hohokam

An O'odam word meaning "those who have gone", the name given the people who lived in permanent settlements in southern Arizona approximately 450 CE to 1450 CE. They lived near rivers, built irrigation canals, and developed desert farming.

Irrigation Canal

A ditch or waterway built to divert water from rivers or streams to crops.

Metate and Mano

A mano is a hand-held stone used to grind food. A metate is the lower stone on which food is ground with a mano. The metate is flat or trough-shaped and can be movable or in bedrock.

Monsoon

A season with heavy rains.

Pit-house

A partly underground shelter built of tree trunks, saguaro ribs, brush, and mud.

Potsherds

Broken pottery fragments.

Pottery

Objects of baked clay.

Pump drills

Hand tools made of wood, leather and possibly bone, used for making holes in hard surfaces such as shells for jewelry making.

Tohono O'odam

Present-day "desert people" who may be descendants of the Hohokam.