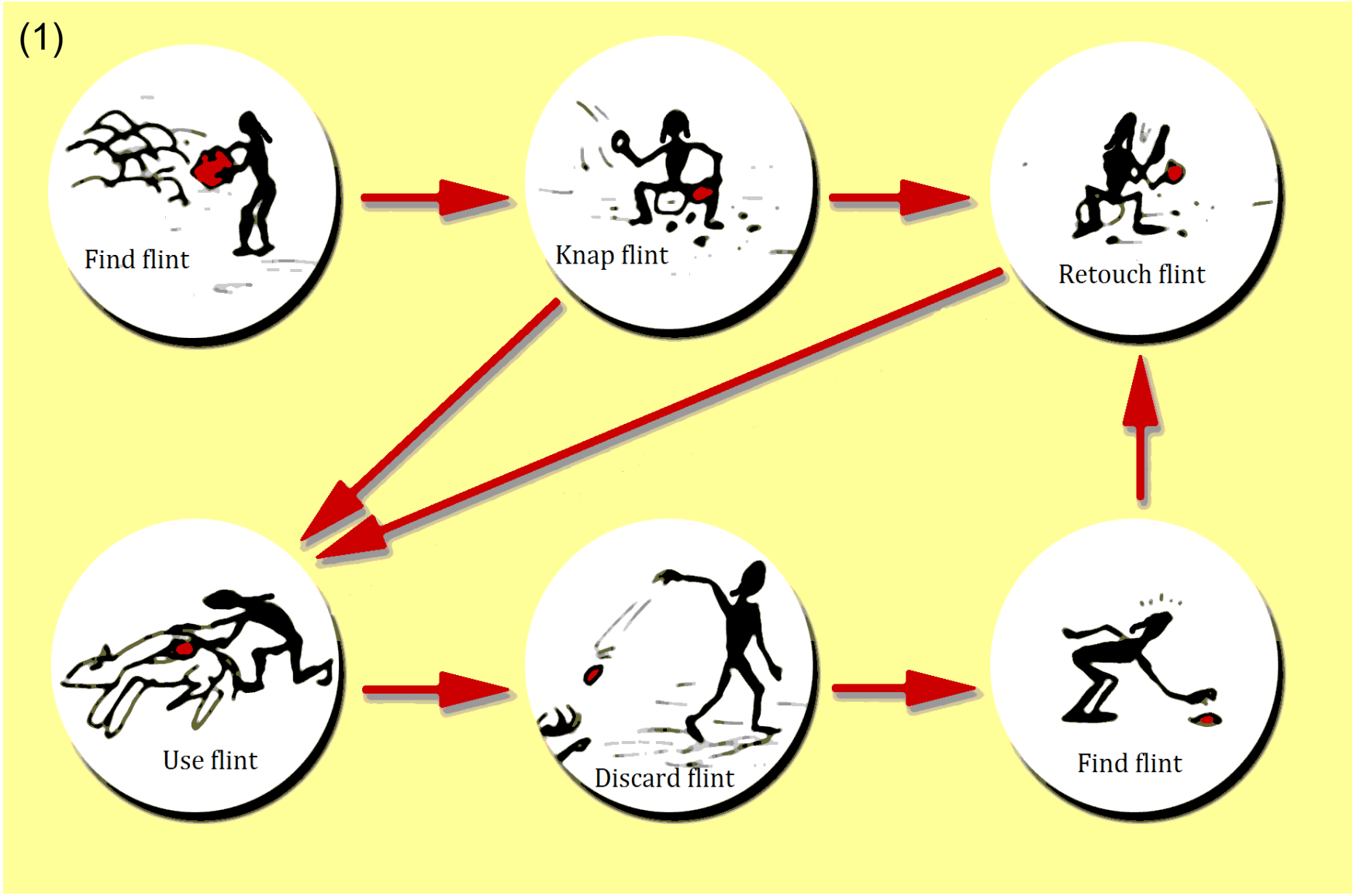
Making & using stone tools

(1)



What sort of stone?

You can't use any old stone. You need to able to shape the stone. Stones that can be shaped in this way include flint, quartzite, and volcanic rocks such as obsidian (a volcanic glass).

Shaping these rocks is called knapping or flaking – because you shape the rock (the *core*) by removing small pieces (*flakes*) from it.

Knapping flint

Flint can be knapped with a hard stone.

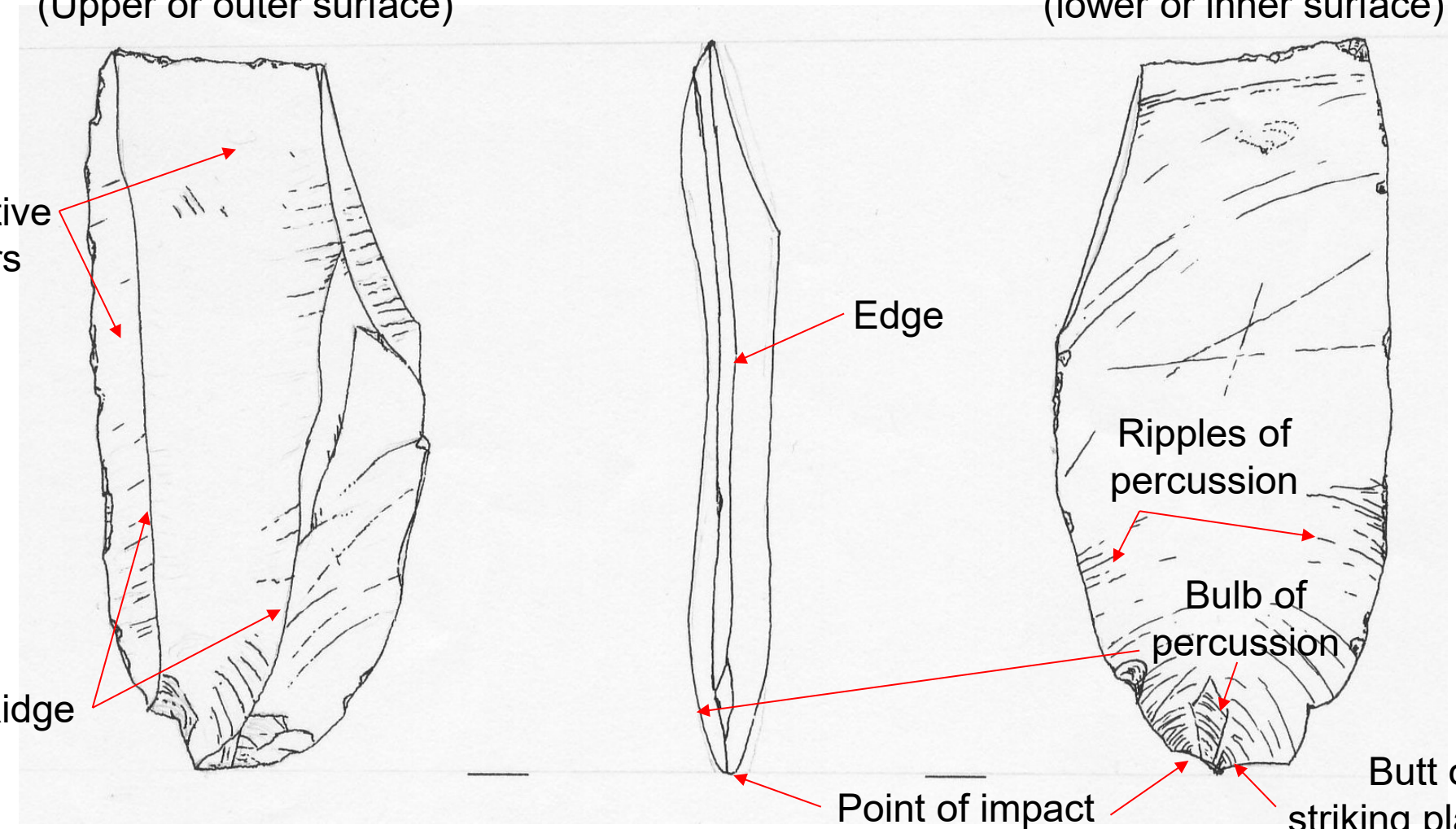
You can also use a softer hammer like an antler.

Fine work and retouch can be done by pressure flaking (pressing down on the flint with a pointed tool)

Both the shaped rock (the *core*) and the *flakes* can be turned into tools.

Parts of a flake – can you find these on your potato flakes?

(6)



Types of tools

- Stone tools of many different types were made by our ancestors. But the most important differences between them were how they were used.
- Stone tools were used for cutting and chopping (meat, bone and plants), carving (wood, bone and antler), cleaning animal skins, and as weapon tips (e.g. spear and arrow heads).

Knives for cutting, chopping & slicing

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Lower Palaeolithic handaxes

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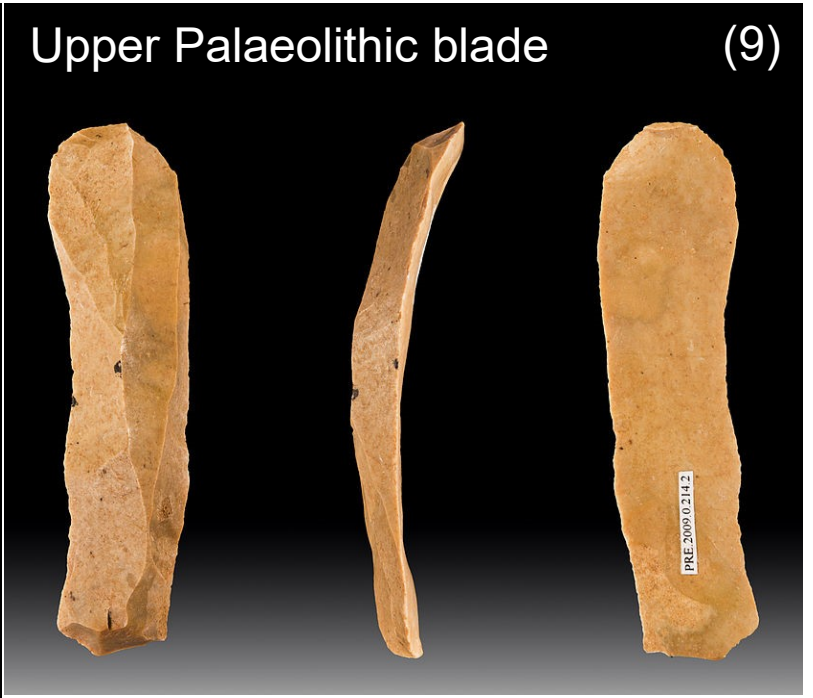
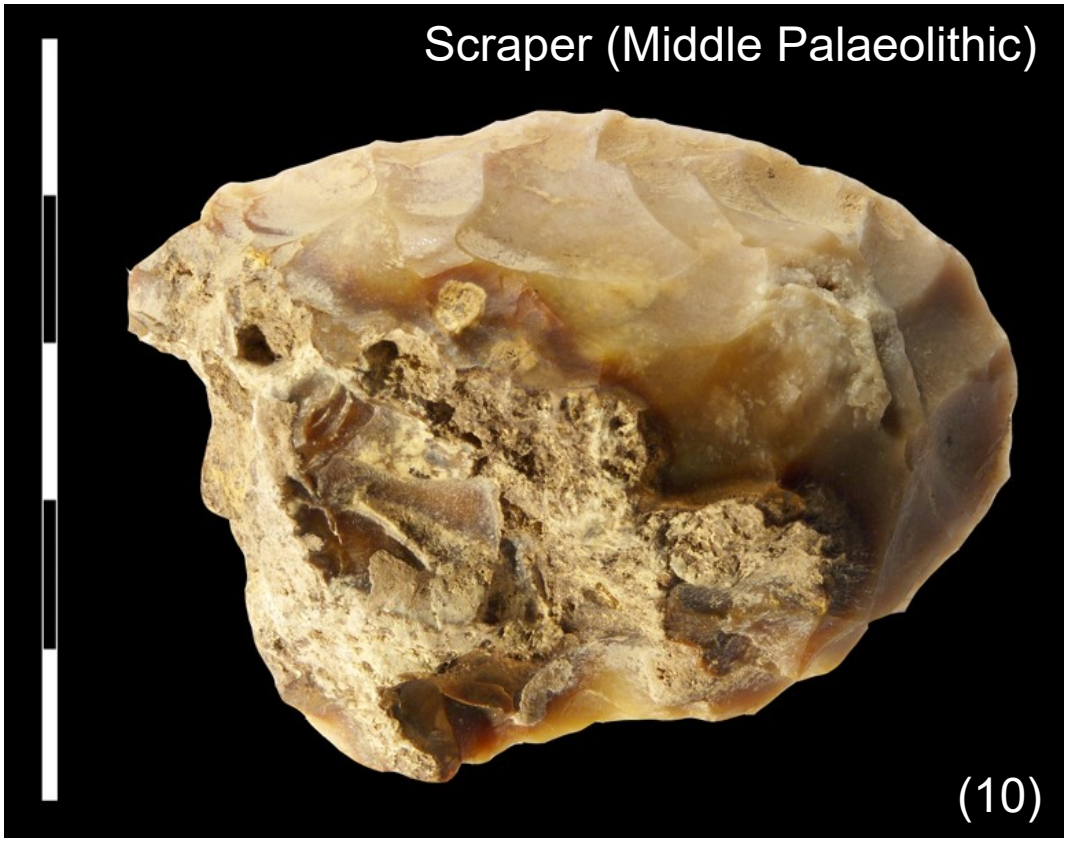
Upper Palaeolithic blade (9)



A natural sharp knife, but Upper Palaeolithic blades were also used to make scrapers, spear tips and other tools

Tools for scraping skins (left) & engraving bone/antler/wood (right)



Projectile tips

Levallois point (Middle Palaeolithic)

(12)

(13)

Leaf point (Upper Palaeolithic)

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