

Technical Description: Primitive Stone Scraper by Jacquie Shillis, former technical writing student

Primitive Stone Scraper: A Description

In the fall of 1988, a construction crew found a primitive stone scraper next to a driveway in an area that had been dug for the installation of a drainage pipe. The tool can be described both in terms of its characteristics and recognizable parts.

Characteristics of the Stone Scraper

The shape, size, color, and texture of the stone scraper distinguish it as one that was made and used approximately 10,000 years ago in Central Texas.

Shape. Figure 1, the top view of the scraper, best reveals its shape. The tool has an irregular, slightly less than half-moon shape, with one end tapering to more of a point than the other. The curved sides taper from a relatively flat base to the top.

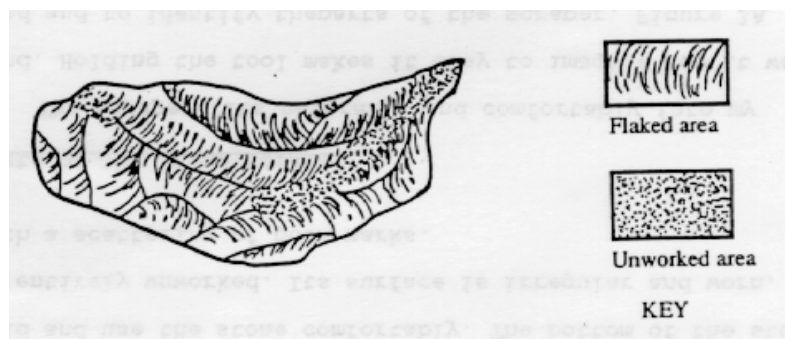


Figure 1. Top view of the implement. The key for flaked and unworked surfaces in this figure also applies to subsequent illustrations.

Size. The tool is approximately 3-3/4 inches long, 1-5/8 inches high at its tallest point, and 1-5/8 inches thick at its thickest point. The side views of the tool shown in Figure 2 indicate only a small decrease in height at the ends of the stone. The stone weighs 8-1/2 ounces.

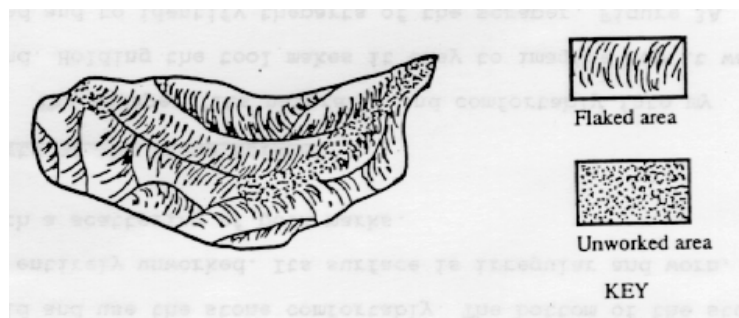


Figure 2. Side views of the tool.

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Color. The flaked areas expose the core of the stone which ranges in color from reddish to yellowish brown. The natural, unworked outer surface of the stone is irregularly colored, with areas of light brown, gray, white, and reddish brown.

Texture. The rock used to make the implement is chert, commonly called "flint." When struck with another harder stone, layers of chert flake off, leaving smooth, flat surfaces with relatively sharp edges. Certain edges of the implement have been filed or ground to make it possible to hold and use the stone comfortably. The bottom of the stone is entirely unworked. Its surface is irregular and worn, with a scattering of pock marks.

The scraper fits naturally and comfortably into my hand. Holding the tool makes it easy to imagine how it was used and to identify the parts of the scraper. Figure 3A shows the thumb rest and scraping or digging edge of the tool. Figure 3B is an illustration of the tool as it is held. It is quite possible that the scraping edge at one time extended farther and was capable of cutting as well as scraping or digging.

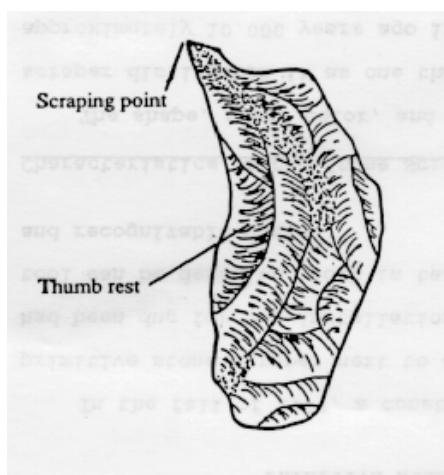


Figure 3A. Parts of the tool.

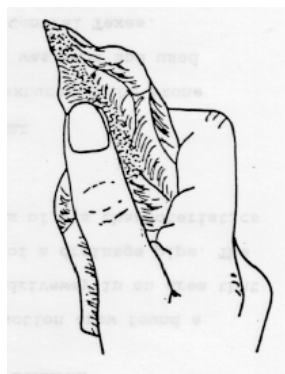


Figure 3B. The tool as held and used.