

Various artefacts found in Nunavik:




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 Join us!
 Avataq Archaeology

In collaboration with:



Nunavik Archaeology



This document provides information about how, together, we can preserve archaeological heritage for future generations of Nunavimmiut.



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 Institut culturel Avataq
 Avataq Cultural Institute



What is an archaeological artefact?

An archaeological artefact is an object that attests to the presence of humans at particular places and times in the past. It can be made of stone, wood, ivory or bone and includes harpoon heads, scrapers, blades, discarded stone flakes, soapstone lamps, as well as many other types of objects found at archaeological sites.

What is an archaeological site?

An archaeological site is a place where archaeological artefacts and human-built structures such as tent rings, sod houses, graves and inuksuit are found. Sites are found on the surface of the soil, or are located beneath the surface. Sites are generally quite vulnerable when located near roads or trails, and must not be disturbed.

How much is an archaeological artefact worth?

While archaeological artefacts have no commercial or monetary value, they do have significant cultural value. They allow an understanding of how people lived in the past. They are also valuable to the local community for educational purposes.

Who owns the archaeological artefacts?

Archaeological artefacts do not belong to the person who found them. They should be collectively owned for the benefit of all Nunavimmiut. Avataq and other institutions (such as local museums), under the authority of the Quebec and Federal governments, store artefacts in conditions that best ensure their long-term preservation and accessibility to school groups, visitors and local people who want to share their cultural heritage.

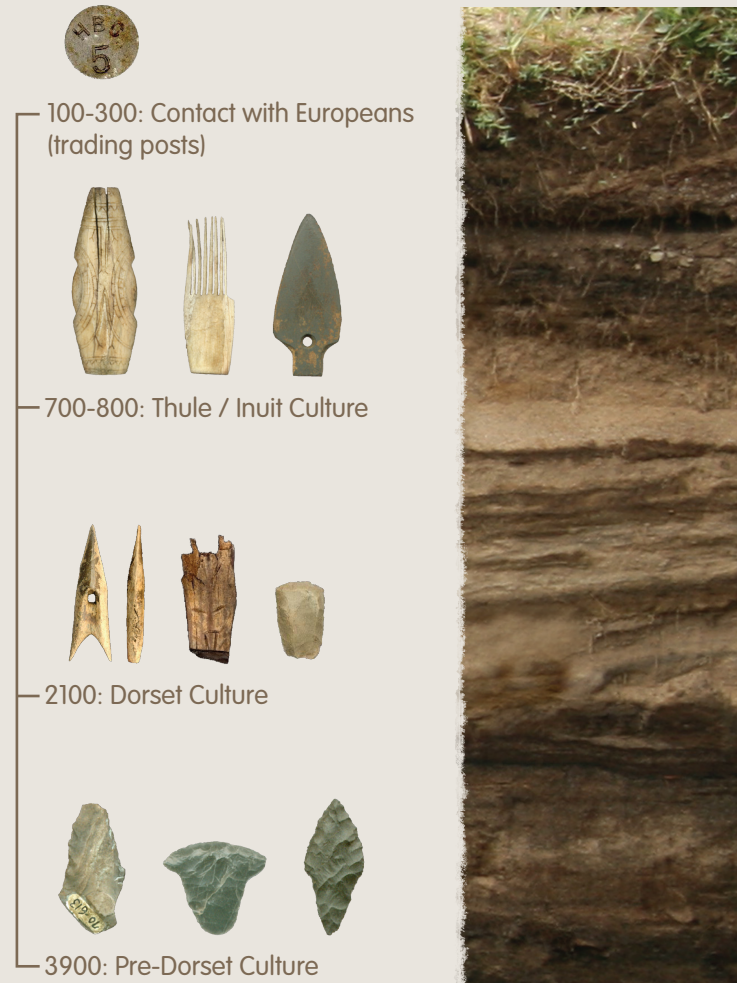
Archaeologists at your service!

Archaeologists are specialists who reconstruct the past from material evidence (sites and the artefacts and other materials they contain). Avataq's archaeologists respond to the requests of local authorities and all Nunavimmiut. Our fieldwork always involves local people (field schools, collaborations on projects, and job opportunities). Our expertise helps to preserve Nunavik heritage from potential destruction caused by construction, mining activities, etc.

Preserving Archaeological Heritage together



Years before today:



Did you know?

Canadian laws strictly prohibit the sale of artefacts. In Québec, it is against the law to excavate or disturb an archaeological site, or to remove artefacts without proper authorization. In order to excavate an archaeological site, a government-issued permit is required. Such permits are granted to trained and experienced archaeologists, who will write up reports to be made available to local authorities and all Nunavimmiut.

Preserving archaeological heritage together

Here are two simple guidelines that you can follow if you come across an archaeological site or an artefact:

- Take care not to disturb the site. For example: do not collect artefacts, dig holes or move any stones, in particular those that may be part of a human-built structure. The precise location of artefacts needs to be recorded by archaeologists, as this information provides valuable clues about former inhabitants of the area.
- Nunavik is a vast region and in order to preserve and protect archaeological sites from natural erosion and construction works, Avataq needs the collaboration of all Nunavimmiut, local and regional authorities and visitors. Please do not hesitate to keep us informed!

Do you have artefacts in your possession?

Also, if you were not previously aware of the information contained in this brochure and you have archaeological artefacts, remember: these artefacts are part of Nunavik's collective heritage and they deserve to be preserved securely and shared. For these reasons, we encourage you to donate all artefacts in your possession to Avataq, your local museum, or to local authorities for safe-keeping.

Avataq's mandate in Archaeology

Avataq was given the mandate by the Elders of Nunavik to protect, study, and promote Nunavik's archaeological sites and resources. Please remember that Avataq is always ready to help and to assist you in preserving Nunavik heritage.