

VISIT GUIDE 2026

Stonehenge

Salisbury · From 32.58€

https://stonehenge.visit-tickets.com/en/ · Skip-the-line tickets & rates



History & experience

ORIGIN & HISTORY

Four millennia of mystery

GOOGLE 4.5 ★★★★☆ 68 828 reviews

TIQETS 4.5 ★★★★☆ 1 273 reviews

Located in Wiltshire, **Stonehenge** is far more than a mere pile of stones; it is a fascinating testament to human ingenuity. Built between **3000 and 1100 BC**, this megalithic monument was erected in five distinct major stages, marking the transition from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. Each phase of addition reflects the cultural and technological transformations of the prehistoric societies that inhabited this open plain.

The very etymology of the site remains a subject of passionate debate among historians. The term "henge," a regressive derivative of Stonehenge, now designates a specific category of circular monuments. However, Stonehenge is considered atypical because its bank is located inside the ditch, unlike other classified sites. This architectural particularity, combined with its imposing trilithons, makes it a unique case in European archaeology.

The engineering used to assemble these massive blocks remains astonishing. The trilithons, standing over seven meters high, are held together by a complex technique of **tenons and mortises**. This Neolithic precision allowed for the stability of structures that still withstand wind and centuries. The bluestones, transported over long distances from Wales, add a mysterious dimension to the whole, suggesting rituals or distant exchanges.

Classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site alongside Avebury, the site attracts approximately **one million visitors per year**. Scientific excavations, initiated as early as 1901 by Professor Gowland, have helped better understand the chronology of the place. Today, thanks to modern technologies such as Skyscape, we can visualize the solstitial alignment that probably guided ancestral ceremonies.

THE EXPERIENCE

The moment you leave the shuttle or begin your 25-minute walk, the atmosphere changes dramatically. The Wiltshire plain opens up before you, swept by a constant wind that seems to have sculpted the landscape. The gradual approach toward the megaliths creates a palpable tension, blending historical anticipation with the raw beauty of the wild nature. It is a moment of **contemplative silence** where modern time fades away.

Upon arriving at the circle, the imposing presence of the sarsen stones strikes the imagination. Sunlight, filtered through the lintels, plays with the cast shadows, creating striking visual effects depending on the time of day. You are not merely looking at rocks; you are witnessing a **cosmic architecture** aligned with celestial movements. The emotion is intense, a direct connection with our ancestors who raised these stone giants nearly five thousand years ago.



PREPARE YOUR VISIT

Practical information

ADDRESS
Wiltshire, England · Direct shuttle access from the parking lot or a 25-minute walk across the plain.

OPENING HOURS
Open daily, with hours varying by season. Check the exact time slot on your English Heritage ticket.

FARES
Free child admission based on age (check variants). {promo}.

VISIT DURATION
Allow at least 2 to 3 hours to enjoy the museum, the shuttle, and the path around the megaliths without rushing. This time also allows you to discover the perma

PHOTOS
Photography is allowed everywhere except flash inside the circle. Drones are prohibited without a specific permit to preserve the silence of the site.

AUDIENCE
Ideal for families and history enthusiasts. The grassy terrain requires comfortable shoes and a waterproof jacket, as the ground can be slippery after rain.

HOW TO GET THERE

Access & transport

🚌 **Bus**
: Down — 3 min à pied
Salisbury Railway Station (57 min) · Southampton Airport (174 min)

🚗 **Car**
Salisbury Railway Station (44 min) · Southampton Airport (141 min)

🚲 **Bike**
Salisbury Railway Station (58 min) · Southampton Airport (193 min)

LOCALISATION

Où se trouve Stonehenge ?



📍 Amesbury — SP4 7DE Salisbury

🌐 51°10.733′ N, 1°49.573′ O



ORGANIZATION

Organizing your Neolithic immersion

Welcome Center and Museum

Your visit begins at the modern welcome center, located near the parking lot. The interactive museum showcases major archaeological discoveries, including artifacts found on the site. Immersive screens reconstruct the monument's construction step by step. It is the ideal place to download the free audioguide before heading out.

Outdoor Route (Walk or Shuttle)

You can reach the monument either by free shuttle or on foot via a 25-minute grassy path. This approach crosses the Wiltshire plain, offering a first glimpse of the wild landscapes. The walking route is recommended to appreciate the isolation and gradual immersion into the site's atmosphere.

The Stone Circle

At the heart of the experience, you gain access to the landscaped perimeter surrounding the megaliths. You can move freely between the sarsen stones and the bluestones, while respecting the rule prohibiting touching the surfaces. It is here that the solstitial alignment takes on its full meaning, especially during the equinoxes.

ACCESSIBILITY

♿ **Disabled Access**
Flat paths and adapted shuttles ensure smooth access for people with reduced mobility.

👨‍👩‍👧 **Families**
Playful route with reconstructions, suitable for children curious about ancient history.

🎧 **Audio guide**
French, English, Spanish



Must-sees

SELECTION

The megalithic wonders

01 Outer Circle

The Sarsen Trilithons

Five pairs of massive pillars topped with lintels form the central horseshoe. Their assembly using mortise and tenon joints testifies to exceptional Neolithic engineering. Observe the precision of the joints that have ensured their stability for over 4,000 years. This is the most iconic and photographed element of the site.

> 💡 These sandstone blocks weigh approximately 25 tonnes each, a colossal logistical challenge for the time.

02 Inner circle

The Blue Stones

Smaller and darker in color, these diorites probably originate from Wales. Their presence suggests exchanges or rituals related to healing. They form an inner circle and part of the horseshoe. Their distant origin adds a layer of spiritual mystery to the monument.

> 💡 Some theories suggest that they had specific acoustic or medical properties.

03 Monumental avenue

The Heel Stone

Located at the entrance to the avenue, this isolated stone marks the solstice axis. During sunrise on the summer solstice, light passes exactly between it and the center of the monument. It is the key point for understanding the astronomical orientation of Stonehenge. Be sure to position yourself there during seasonal peak hours.

> 💡 It has been re-erected several times over the centuries to maintain the precise alignment.

04 Outer perimeter

The Aubrey Holes

A circle of 56 holes dug into the ground, named after John Aubrey. They may have supported wooden posts or ephemeral stones. Their regular arrangement intrigues archaeologists regarding their ritual function. They materialize the original structure before the addition of permanent megaliths.

> 💡 Human remains have been found in some of these holes, indicating funerary practices.

05

Center of the horseshoe

The Altar Stone

A large rectangular stone laid flat at the exact center of the monument. Its precise function remains debated: sacrificial altar, support for offerings, or a simple architectural element? It constitutes the symbolic focal point of the whole. Its central location underscores the ritual importance of the site's core.

> 💡 It is composed of two slightly different halves, suggesting an ancient repair.

06

Main Access

The Monumental Avenue

A three-kilometer-long processional way leading to the River Avon. It was flanked by ditches and banks, now vanished but detectable through surveying. This avenue guided processions toward the monument, enhancing the dramatic impact of the arrival. It connects Stonehenge to the broader sacred landscape.

> 💡 Funerary mounds were aligned along this route, accompanying the deceased into the afterlife.

07

Optimal viewpoint

Solstice View

Position yourself behind the Heel Stone to observe the sunrise on the summer solstice. The light bursts through between the stones, illuminating the center of the monument. This annual event attracts thousands of spectators and remains the most spectacular experience at the site. Plan your visit accordingly to witness this unique natural phenomenon.

> 💡 The ancients must have used this alignment to set their agricultural calendar.

08

Visitor Center

Interactive Museum

Before entering the circle, the museum offers 3D reconstructions and detailed explanations of the construction phases. It contextualizes recent discoveries and current theories. It is essential for understanding the site's complexity before seeing it in person. Children particularly enjoy the tactile animations.

> 💡 The museum also displays relics from the daily life of Neolithic builders.

TIPS

Maximizing your visit

TIMING

You must book a specific dated time slot via English Heritage. Tickets often sell out quickly, especially during peak periods such as the solstices or summer. Check the seasonal opening hours on your ticket.

TICKET

The adult fare is approximately €32.58. Children often benefit from free admission depending on their age. Download the free English Heritage audio tour before your visit to enhance your experience at no extra cost.

ROUTE

Choose between a 25-minute walk or the free shuttle. The walk offers a gradual immersion into the wild landscape, while the shuttle is ideal if you are in a hurry or have physical constraints. Strictly adhere to the time indicated on your ticket.

PHOTO

Photography is allowed everywhere except for flash within the circle. Drones are prohibited without a specific permit. The best angles to capture the solstice alignment are available via the Skyscape app, which simulates celestial movements.

BREAK

Allow at least 2 to 3 hours to enjoy the museum, the shuttle, and the trail around the megaliths without rushing. Have lunch in Amesbury before or after your visit, as the site itself does not offer extensive dining options.

CHILDREN

The site is perfectly suited for families, with pathways adapted for strollers and wheelchairs. The interactive trail featuring reconstructions at the museum captures the attention of children curious about ancient history.

AUDIOGUIDE

Use the free audio tour from English Heritage, available in French, English and Spanish. It greatly enriches the walk and explains the subtleties of the alignments. Complement it with the Skyscape app to visualize the movements of the sun and moon.

COMFORT

Wear comfortable shoes and a waterproof garment, as the ground can be slippery and wind is frequent. The weather changes quickly in Wiltshire, so an extra layer is recommended in all seasons. Secure lockers are available at the welcome center.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

Do I really need to book in advance?

Yes, booking a dated time slot is mandatory via English Heritage to regulate visitor numbers. Without a specific ticket, access to the stone circle may be refused. We recommend booking as soon as sales open to guarantee

Can I change my time slot after purchase?

Changes depend on the terms displayed before final payment. It is often possible to change the date if spots remain available on the official portal. Always check the flexibility of your specific package when ordering.

Is there a current promotion?

Seasonal offers appear regularly on the official website. Keep an eye out for low-traffic periods like winter to find reduced rates or family bundles. Sign up for newsletters so you don't miss these fleeting opportunitie

Does the ticket include access to the museum?

Absolutely, the standard ticket includes full access to the modern visitor center and its archaeological museum. This is where you will find reconstructions and contextual explanations before heading to the stones. Allow

How long does the visit take?

Allow approximately 2 to 3 hours for a complete immersion. This includes reading time at the museum, the shuttle or walk to the site, and exploring the megalithic circle. Families with children may take longer.

DID YOU KNOW?

Anecdotes & curiosities

Debated etymology

The name Stonehenge has been attested since the Middle Ages. Some see it as 'suspended stones', others as a 'gallows'. This ambiguity reflects the medieval perception of the site as early as the 10th century, when travelers were already describing these strange structures not far from Salisbury.

Atypical henge

Unlike other henges, Stonehenge has an inner bank rather than an outer one. This architectural feature, combined with its imposing trilithons, makes it a totally atypical site in the archaeological classification of British megalithic monuments.

Pioneering excavations

The first scientific excavations date back to 1901 under the direction of Professor Gowland. These works were followed by major restorations in the 20th century, notably by Colonel Hawley and Richard Atkinson, to stabilize structures weakened by time.

Astronomical alignment

The site is precisely oriented toward the sunrise at the summer solstice and the sunset at the winter solstice. This orientation is not accidental and indicates that the builders mastered astronomical observation with remarkable precision for the Neolithic period.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

After your immersion in the past, the city of **Salisbury** offers a perfect contrast. Just a few kilometers away, its cathedral houses Europe's tallest medieval spire, providing panoramic views of the region. For a culinary break, head to the picturesque village of **Amesbury**, where local restaurants serve comforting English specialties after a windy walk. If you have time, the nearby site of **Avebury**, another UNESCO gem, allows you to deepen your understanding of henges in an authentic rural setting. These complementary sites significantly enrich the overall experience of discovering Britain's prehistoric heritage.



Visiting Stonehenge is accepting to be overwhelmed by the scale of time. It is not simply a tourist excursion, but an **intellectual pilgrimage** toward the origins of our civilization. Whether you are passionate about history or simply curious, the site offers a unique sensory experience. Leave with the certainty of having touched the invisible, where science meets myth, under the vast sky of Wiltshire.