

Geologic Time Scale

*MYA means millions of years ago

Era	Period	Epoch	MYA*	Plant and Animal Development
Cenozoic	Quaternary	Holocene	0.01	First written language, Beginning of human history
		Pleistocene	1.6	Modern humans, Many extinctions
	Tertiary	Pliocene	5	First hominids
		Miocene	23	Rodents, grasses, kelp
		Oligocene	35	Modern mammal families
		Eocene	57	First whales
		Paleocene	65	Carnivorous mammals, monotremes
	Mesozoic	Cretaceous	145	Many extinctions, including dinosaurs and sea reptiles, first flowering plants
		Jurassic	208	First rays, first birds, dinosaur diversity/dominance
Triassic–Jurassic Extinction				
Triassic		245	First dinosaurs and mammals	
Permian–Triassic Extinction				
Paleozoic	Permian	290	First mammal-like reptiles	
	Carboniferous	360	First tetrapods, large coal swamps	
	Late Devonian Extinction			
	Devonian	408	First insects	
	Silurian	440	Fish dominant, first land plants	
	Ordovician–Silurian Extinction			
	Ordovician	510	First fishes with jaws, first fishes with cranium	
	Cambrian	570	Oldest bone fragments, first organisms with shells	
Precambrian		4650	First one-celled and multicelled organisms, oldest life on earth, origin of Earth	

Source: Martin, R. A. (2003)