



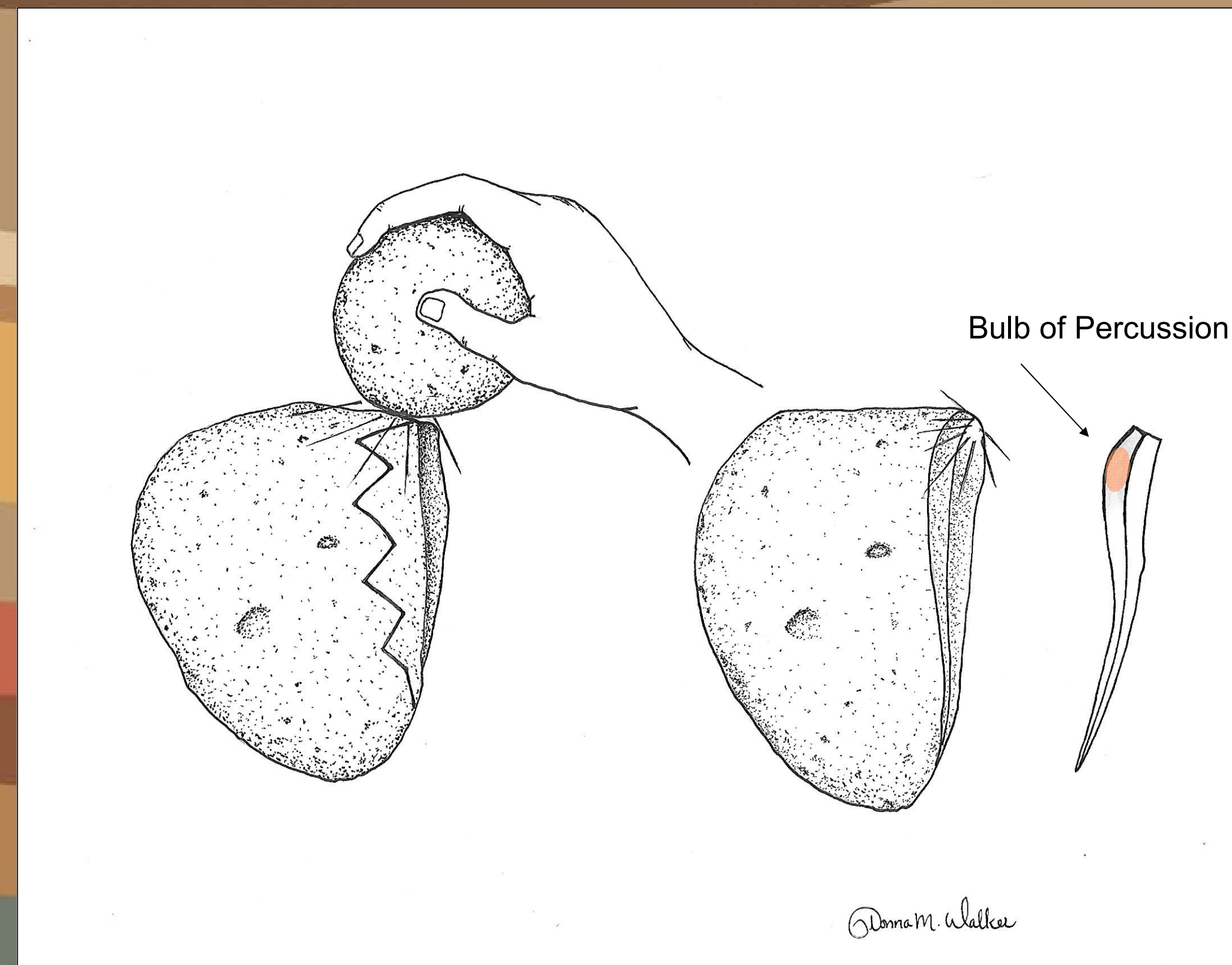
# Archaeology: 101

## *How are stone tools made?*

Stone tools have been made all over the world at different times. Stone was the primary raw material for tools for over 3 million years. The Stone Age ended when humans discovered how to make metal implements in China, Europe, Africa and the Middle East. In the Americas, the Stone Age ended when Europeans arrived and introduced steel and iron tools to the people inhabiting the New World.

In general, there are two types of stone tools named for the method of production. Chipped stone tools are manufactured by carefully chipping away bits of stone to achieve the desired shape. Chipped stone tools can be made with very sharp edges or points and were used for hunting, food preparation and building shelters.

Ground stone tools are made by grinding, shaping and smoothing the stone. Ground stone tools were used to grind food or other substances. Weapons, such as axes and clubs, could also be made using the grinding technique.



Chipped stone tools have characteristics that distinguish them from naturally broken stone. The easiest one to identify is the bulb of percussion. This is formed when a stone is struck with another tool. Initially, the energy entering the stone is quite strong and then tapers off. The resulting flake is thicker at the top and thinner at the bottom.



**Top:** Ground stone tools are smooth and are made by grinding and smoothing the surface of the stone.

**Above:** Chipped stone tools are made by flaking the stone to shape it.