

## Evidence

This document shows the evidence found by archaeologists and what this tells us about life in ancient India.

Basket-making and mat-weaving are represented on hard baked clay floors and fired clay lumps. Coiled baskets and woven mats were made from reeds and grasses, possibly using polished bone awls and spatulas. Bronzed models of two-wheeled carts have been found at Chanhudaro and Harappa.

Flat-bottomed Indus boats are shown on seals and moulded tablets. A model of high-prowed sailboat has been found at Lothal.

### **Pottery items found:**

- Cooking pots
- Storage vessels, platters, shallow bowls and small pots were hand made
- Plain large storage jars - probably used for grain or water.
- Shallow bowls - probably used to contain cooked food.
- Pedestalled dishes or bowls - used for ritual offerings or for serving food to guests.
- Perforated cylinder jar - probably used to strain liquids. These cylinders have been found with burial offerings in the Harappan cemetery, where they are placed vertically inside large open-mouthed vessels
- Drinking vessels: early flat-bottomed forms became more globular and in the final phase the shapes changed to pointed-base goblets.
- Figurines
- Stoneware bangles were important symbols of power and used by the elites in only the largest urban centres
- Miniature vessels
- Glazed faience ornaments

### **Metal items found:**

- Copper and bronze vessels
- Bronze plates
- Copper saws and chisels, tablets, beads and spacers

Finished metal objects were important symbols of wealth and power in the Indus cities and were often hoarded. One treasure hoard from Harappa consisted of a large cooking pot containing copper tools.

## **Textiles**

Plain weave fabric impressions have been found on the interior of faience vessels. The uniform thickness of the threads in a single piece of fabric and the tight weave reflected by the impressions indicate the use of spinning wheels. Cotton threads have been identified on copper tools and on a copper mirror.

## **Beads**

Tools used to make beads included stone drills (made of chert or jasper), copper drills, soft antler hammer, horn hammer, copper and antler points. These were used to produce the longest and most slender beads of carnelian in the world.

## **Agriculture**

Plants and animals used by the Indus people can be identified through the motifs on pottery, seals, tablets and terracotta figurines, animal bones and plant remains preserved in the city streets, garbage dumps or floors of houses.

Tillage equipment included a plough pulled by draft oxen. This is confirmed by the discovery of a ploughed field at Kalibangan and a toy terracotta plough from Banawali. Hoes and digging sticks would also have been used. Irrigation wells were used.

Cattle and buffalo were depicted in figurines. Sheep bones found at Harappa indicate specialised breeding for meat and wool. Goat bones have also been found.