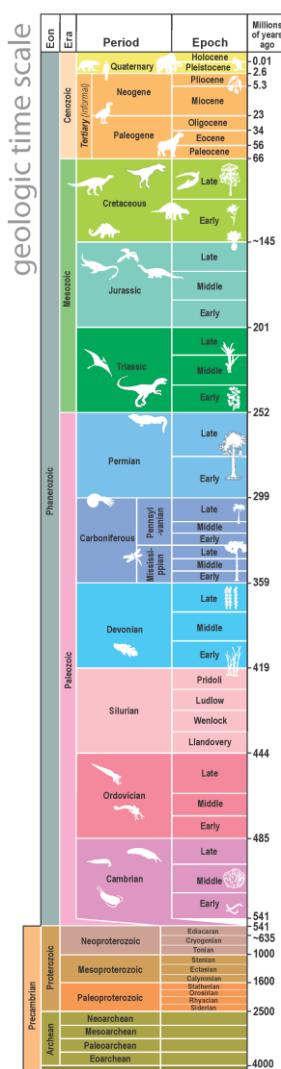




Students can be introduced to the concept of “way up” by laying a novel on its face. We read a book the same way we read the time scale, from the first page to be written (or first rock laid down) to the last to be written (or last bed to be laid down). Books have chapters describing significant periods of time and these are separated by significant story changing events. In geology these breaks may be caused by mountain building, continents being torn apart, dramatic changes of climate and major changes in flora and fauna

A poster of the geological time scale can be obtained from the Geological Society of Australia <https://www.ga.gov.au/education/classroom-resources> or by contacting Geoscience Australia at [education@gov.au](mailto:education@gov.au).

### The Geological Time Scale



#### Please note:

- The column is always read from bottom to top – from oldest to youngest.
- Some of the earliest lifeforms to be found so far are the fossil stromatolites at Marble Bar, Western Australia
- The timescale breaks down as follows: eons > eras > periods > epochs > ages
- The boundary between these is marked by a change in dominant life form and/or a major tectonic event.
- Many of the names relate to local tribes or areas in Europe or USA. (Cambrian – Cambriogenses tribe, Devonian – Devon).
- Names can change across national boundaries to relate to local history and findings.
- Students can become easily disenchanted by a teleological exploration of this subject.
- It is difficult for our minds to grasp the dimensions of time involved.

Geological Timescale (Government of South Australia, [Department of Energy and Mining](http://Department of Energy and Mining))

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These following activity is to encourage understanding of deep time and scientific thinking.

**Personal Timescale and Geological Timescale**

Students draw a human timescale and discuss significant divisions and breaks and then relate this to the geological timescale. They then use a 100m tape measure to gain an impression of geological time.

Worksheets for personal and proportional scales are provided.

- Eon – Infancy - adolescence - maturity
- Era - child, primary school, secondary school, university or TAFE, independence, marriage, parenthood, retirement.
- Period – crawling, walking riding a bicycle, driving a car, getting married owning a house, having children, leaving work, etc
- Epoch - significant events which can be used to separate these periods.
- One column has been left blank for an Index fossil for the next activity.

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