

TERMINOLOGY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY LECTURES

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- acropolis** - "High town"; a defensible hill within an ancient city where the important buildings were located.
- abecedary** - Alphabet written out for a student or novice to follow.
- amulet** - Small object worn to ward off evil or bring good luck.
- anthropoid** - "Human-like."
- archaeology** - Study of ancient things.
- artifact** - Man-made object.
- ashlar masonry** - Squared blocks of building stone.
- balk (baulk)** - Vertical side of an excavation area which provides a cross-section of the history of the area.
- bullae** - Lump of clay or wax with a seal impression in it; used to seal documents or other items.
- cartouche** - Oval containing the name of an Egyptian pharaoh in hieroglyphs.
- casemate wall** - Double wall with periodic cross walls forming compartments.
- charnel house** - Structure where bones of the dead were placed.
- Cisjordan** - Area of Palestine west of the Jordan river.
- collared rim store jar** - Term used for pithoi used in the Iron I period (12th-10th centuries B.C.) since they had a ridge or "collar" in the neck area.
- cuneiform** - "Wedge-shaped" writing used in ancient Mesopotamia.
- demotic** - Simplified cursive form of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.
- epigraphy** - Study of writing.
- fosse** - Moat or ditch forming part of a defensive system.
- glacis** - Term found in the literature to describe an earthen embankment built as part of a fortification system, especially in the Middle Bronze Age.
- hieratic** - Cursive form of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic writing.
- hieroglyphs** - Sacred or priestly writing; the picture writing of ancient Egypt.
- high date** - Early date.
- Hyksos** - Egyptian word meaning "foreign rulers." Applied to Canaanites from the coastal region who settled in Egypt, eventually taking over the northern part of the country for about a century, ca. 1640-1530 B.C. (1668-1560)?
- in situ** - Artifact found in its original position as it was left in antiquity.
- khirbet** - Ancient site which does not have a sufficient accumulation of ancient debris to form a mound or tell.
- locus** - Basic unit of an archaeological excavation comprising any definable item such as a soil layer, pit, floor, wall, etc.
- low date** - Late date.
- massebah** - Hebrew for an upright sacred stone.
- necropolis** - "City of the dead"; ancient burial ground or cemetery.
- ostrakon (pl. ostraca)** - Sherd with writing on it.