

LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES

Lifestyle activities are a mixture of habit, convention and culture.

- *Habit* – this is the way we do things peculiar to ourselves
- *Convention*—this is the way we do things as members of a group
- *Culture*—this is the way we do things as part of a wider society.

FACTORS WHICH CAN AFFECT LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES

Technology

Perhaps the greatest factor that has changed lifestyle over the past 50 years is technology. The pace of technological change today is very fast and so lifestyles are changing very fast as well. In the past, especially before the 20th century, technological change was much slower. This is one of the biggest differences between life today and in the past.

Economics

Obviously, lifestyle is influenced by wealth. Today, 'social mobility' is a commonplace factor in society but in the past most people were destined by birth to a particular social class. In that way there was often very little they could do to effect change in their lifestyle.

Climate

Where we live in the world has a huge bearing on our lifestyle. In general our lifestyle is better if we live in a climate similar to that in which we grew up with. For example, people from extreme climate areas, like desert nomads or hunters from the Arctic, find it very difficult to live in more moderate climates.

Eating

Meals are generally organised by the family. In traditional societies meals are very important social occasions. In today's busy world meals have become less important, more a matter of convenience, though meals on special occasions like birthdays and Christmas are still important social occasions.

Travel

The introduction of the motorcar revolutionised travel in the early 20th century. Now motorised travel is part of everybody's lifestyle. Our lifestyle is dependant of access to transport

Relaxation

How we spend our free time is an important factor in our lifestyle. Society is now organised in such a way that leisure time is available to most people. Access to music, books, magazines, TV, computers, etc. is now part of most people's lives.

Sleep

A vital need for all humans is a good nights sleep. It is important that most people sleep at approximately the same time. Otherwise it would be very difficult for society to cater for our needs.

Meals

An important part of lifestyle is cooking and meals. How are archaeologists going to understand about these activities in the past? They need to excavate and they need to find food remains and, if very lucky, the utensils in which they were cooked and with which they were eaten.

Location

Closely associated with lifestyle are the places where these activities normally occur and the artefacts or things associated with these activities.

THE BALLPOINT PEN—THE BIRO

In 1888, John Loud, an American leather tanner, patented a 'roller-ball-tip marking pen'. Over the next thirty years another 350 patents for 'ball-type' pens were filed, but none of them went into production. The problem was not so much the roller mechanism but finding a suitable ink for it. If the ink was too weak the pen leaked, if it was too thick it clogged.

Some fifty years after Loud's patent, a major breakthrough occurred. In 1935, a Hungarian newspaper editor by the name of László Bíró, developed a better pen. With the help of his brother Georg (who was a chemist) László started making models of new ballpoint design and creating better ink for their use.

After the brothers showed a model of their pen to the President of Argentina they were invited to that country to set up a factory. When World War II broke the Bíró's fled to Argentina, stopping in Paris on the way to patent their new pen.

By 1942 the Bíró's had set up a factory manufacturing their pen. This enterprise was a complete failure. The Bíró pen depended on gravity for ink to flow into the roller-ball mechanism so that the pen had to be held upright all the time- this was awkward. Also the ink flow was not properly regulated and often made blobs on the paper. However, the Bíró brothers eventually came up with a new design. This used "capillary action" rather than gravity to feed the ink. The "ball" now acted like a metal sponge so that ink flowed more smoothly onto the paper, and the pen could be held at a slant and still work. Though greatly improved the pen was still not a success and eventually the Bíró's business failed.

However, the Bíró's ballpoint pen became popular with American pilots based in Argentina during World War II. The pen worked well at altitude and did not have to be refilled often like a fountain pen. Through the influence of these pilots the U.S. Department of State became interested and asked several American pen manufacturers to develop a similar ballpoint pen. One of these companies, the Eberhard Faber Company, paid the Bíró brothers half a million dollars for the right to use their design in the United States. Eberhard Faber later sold its rights to the Eversharp Company, but neither company succeeded in producing a commercially viable ballpoint pen.

Eventually it was a Chicago salesman, Milton Reynolds, who became the first to market a ballpoint pen successfully. Reynolds had seen Bíró's pen in Argentina and went about copying its main features. Reynolds made millions of pens and sold them to retailers. The first great success for the ballpoint pen came in 1945 when Gimbel's Department Store in New York, sold out its entire stock of 10,000 pens-at \$12.50 each- on the first day they put it up for sale.

However, the effect of this sudden success soon wore off as many problems still existed with the design. For the pen to regain the public's interest it needed to become smooth writing and to stop leaking.

Two men, Patrick Frawley and Fran Seech, came up with the successful formula. Seech was a chemist and had developed a new kind of ballpoint ink. Frawley was so impressed with this ink that he bought Seech's new formula in 1949 and started the Frawley Pen Company. Within a short space of time another improved model with a retractable ballpoint tip and the no-smear ink had been produced. As more and more retailers ordered this new pen, which was named the "Papermate," sales began to take off. Within a few years, the Papermate was selling in the hundreds of millions throughout America.

In Europe, the man responsible for bring the ballpoint pen back to life was Marcel Bich, a French manufacturer. Bich designed a high-quality pen at a low price. He went to the Bíró brothers and arranged to pay them a royalty on their patent. By 1952 Bich was ready to introduce his new pen: a clear-barrelled, smooth-writing, non-leaky, inexpensive ballpoint he called the "Ballpoint Bic."

By the mid-1950s the ballpoint pen was fully accepted by the public as a standard a writing implement. They are now universally known as 'Biros' in testament to the first inventors.

MUSEUMS

‘Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society.’

Definition by the UK Museums Association

Timeline of the National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street

- The Royal Dublin Society purchases Leinster House from the Duke of Leinster in 1815.
- Enactment of The Dublin Science and Art Museum Act of 1877.
- Transfer of Leinster House and the Natural History building (opened to public in 1857) to state ownership.
- Transfer of the collections of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) to state ownership.
- Transfer of other important collections from institutions such as the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College Dublin.
- The new Museum and the National Library (built at the same time) were designed by Thomas Newenham Deane and his son Thomas Manly Deane.
- The museum building consisted of a large rotunda and gallery, with exhibition rooms.
- It was constructed of granite from Co. Dublin faced with sandstone from Co. Donegal; internally it had mosaic and oak floors.
- Dublin Museum of Science and Art first opened to the public in 1890 during the height of the Celtic Revival.
- Renamed *The National Museum of Ireland* in 1908.
- Leinster House housed the offices and staff of the Museum and Library until 1922 when it was appropriated for the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- The Museum is known today as the *National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology and History* and continues to house archaeological collections dating back to 7,000BC.

The **National Museum of Ireland** is one of the nation’s premier cultural institution with a strong emphasis on Ireland’s art, material culture and natural history. Its collections are centred on four sites, three in Dublin and one in the west in Co. Mayo.

- The **National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts and History** at Collins Barracks has state of the art exhibitions on costume and clothing, coins and furniture as well as *Irish Silver* and *Eileen Gray* (Gray was an Irish-born designer whose collection and archive we recently acquired). The museum at Collins Barracks has a changing programme of temporary exhibitions, lecture series and an outdoor programme of summer events.
- The **National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology and History** on Kildare Street exhibits Ireland’s world-famous collection of Bronze Age gold ornaments and unparalleled Irish early Christian treasures such as the Ardagh Chalice, the Derrynaflan Hoard, the Tara Brooch, the Shrine of St Patrick’s Bell and the recently restored Tully Lough Cross. It also houses the Viking Ireland and Medieval Ireland galleries; the former with the artefacts recovered in the Wood Quay excavations and the latter the sacred reliquaries of the Irish Later Middle Ages.
- The **National Museum of Ireland - Natural History** on Merrion Street. This is the oldest part of the museum and has been open on this location for a century and a half. Skeletons of giant Irish deer preside at the entrance to the display of native fauna on the ground floor. Upstairs you will see animals from every corner of the globe and above this on the balconies all manner of animals, birds, insects and the celebrated Blaschka glass model collection.

- The new branch of the National Museum is located at Turlough Park in Co. Mayo. Here is a new purpose-built museum in which the folklife collection is used to create the **National Museum of Ireland - Country Life**. The exhibits here feature the way of life of people in the countryside up to modern times.
- The **National Museum** also has a conservation laboratory.

The **National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology and History** is the national repository for all archaeological objects found in Ireland. This museum houses over 2,000,000 artefacts that range in date between 7,000 BC and the late medieval period.

Exhibitions include the finest collection of prehistoric gold artefacts in Western Europe, examples of metalwork from the Celtic Iron Age, as well as the Museum's world-renowned collection of medieval ecclesiastical objects and jewellery. The Brighter Hoard, the Ardagh Chalice, the Tara Brooch and Derrynaflan Hoard are among the masterpieces on display.

The museum also houses a rich collection of Egyptian material and an historical exhibition which deals with the political background and events which culminated in the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921.

The **National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology and History** is home to the **Irish Antiquities Division** of the National Museum. This division is responsible for the portable archaeological heritage of Ireland. In addition to managing the archaeological collections the staff are also charged with caring for the substantial Ethnographical, Classical and Egyptian collections. The main permanent exhibitions in Kildare Street are:

Prehistoric Ireland

This exhibition documents human settlement in Ireland from the stone tools of the first hunter-gatherers around 7,000 BC to the bronze weapons of the Later Bronze Age around 500 BC. A reconstructed Passage Tomb provides a backdrop to the tools, pottery and personal objects of the Neolithic farmers, including a beautifully decorated flint mace head from Knowth, Co. Meath.

The introduction of metalworking around 2,500 BC and its development are documented. Copper axes and daggers, shields, cauldrons and cast bronze horns (the earliest known Irish musical instruments) are displayed. The exhibition also contains jewellery made from amber, glass and stone as well as wooden examples of shields, wheels and cauldrons. Prominently displayed is a 4,500-year-old logboat from Lurgan, Co. Galway—one of the largest vessels of its type to have been found in Ireland.

Ór - Ireland's Gold

The National Museum's collection of prehistoric goldwork, ranging in date between 2,200 BC and 500 BC, is one of the largest and most important in Western Europe. Most are pieces of jewellery but the precise function of some is unknown.

During the Early Bronze Age the principal products were made from sheet gold, and include sundiscs and the crescentic gold collars called lunulae. Around 1200 BC new gold working techniques were developed. A great variety of torcs was made by twisting bars or strips of gold.

The Treasury

Inspired by the great church treasuries of medieval Europe, this exhibition houses outstanding religious and secular metalwork dating from the pagan Celtic Iron Age through to the Middle Ages. Objects include the sumptuously ornamented Brougher gold collar, found with other neck ornaments and intriguing models of a boat and a cauldron. The Brougher collar is decorated in the La Tène art style introduced from the continent as is the great bronze trumpet from Loughnashade, Co. Armagh.

Pride of place is given to some of the best-known treasures of the 8th-9th century 'Golden Age' such as the Ardagh and Derrynaflan Hoards, the Moylough Belt Shrine and the gilt silver Tara Brooch, remarkable for the sumptuousness and variety of its decoration and the detail and quality of its workmanship. Hoards of silver bullion and brooches, bracelets and other personal ornaments illustrate the impact of the Vikings. A selection of crosiers and the elaborate Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell are illustrative of the new styles and trends of the succeeding Romanesque period.

Viking Ireland

This exhibition documents the Viking Age in Ireland from c. 800 AD to c. 1150 AD. The first contacts between the Vikings and Ireland are evident in material found in Viking graves of the 9th and 10th centuries from Ireland. Finds from Irish settlement sites of the 9th and 10th centuries illustrate rural life, and a selection of silver ornaments indicates the wealth of Scandinavian and Irish settlements of this period.

At the centre of the exhibition is a display of finds from the National Museum's Dublin excavations, carried out between 1962 and 1981. This represents the finest collection of excavation finds from an early medieval urban centre anywhere in Europe. A final section displays ecclesiastical metalwork of the 11th and 12th centuries, which shows the fusion of Scandinavian and Irish art styles at the close of the Viking Age.

Medieval Ireland 1150 - 1550

The exhibition contains three galleries entitled Power, Work and Prayer, reflecting the threefold division of medieval society - nobles, common people and clergy.

The lifestyle of nobles is explored while surviving arms and armour reflect the distinctive characteristics of warfare in medieval Ireland. The exhibition looks at the different forms of agriculture, pastoral and arable, which were practiced. Finds from urban excavations illustrate Ireland's import trade and the various crafts and industries operating in towns. The Irish church changed fundamentally in the 12th century, although many older church traditions survived. The exhibition also looks at religious practice and devotion as well as church furnishings, including a fine selection of late medieval reliquaries: Book Shrines, Bell Shrines and Croziers.

Kingship & Sacrifice - An exhibition of Iron Age bog bodies and related finds

Following the discoveries of Iron Age bog bodies at Oldcroghan, Co. Offaly and Clonycavan, Co. Meath in 2003, a team of international specialists worked with Irish Antiquities and the Conservation Department of the National Museum to examine these human remains.

The exhibition also highlights a theory based on the observation that the bog bodies were placed on significant boundaries linking them with sovereignty and kingship rituals during the Iron Age. Research also indicates that other related material is connected with inauguration rituals of kings and that these rituals can be traced back to the Bronze Age. Many of these objects, such as kingly regalia, horse trappings, weapons, feasting utensils, textiles and boundary markers are on display.

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Ancient Egypt

A showcase of the National Museum of Ireland's Egyptian collection, the majority of artefacts were acquired from excavations carried out in Egypt between the 1890s and the 1920s and range in date from the Stone Age to the Middle Ages. Among the most important objects exhibited are the gilt and painted cartonnage case of the mummy Tentdinebu dated to the 22nd Dynasty c. 945 - 716 BC; the mummy portraits of a woman and a young boy from Hawara dated to the first/second Century AD; and a model of a wooden boat dated to the early 12th Dynasty c. 1900 BC. There is also a number of important stelae, tomb furniture, offering tables, jewellery and household equipment.

Ceramics and Glass from Ancient Cyprus

This exhibition focuses on Cypriot artefacts in the collection of the National Museum of Ireland, many of which have never been exhibited before. Most of the pieces are ceramic and probably come from tombs uncovered in the 19th Century. The artefacts range in date from the Bronze Age, approximately 2500 BC, to the late Roman period, about 300 AD, and are arranged chronologically. The exhibition also includes five clay figurines on loan from the Cyprus Museum, Nicosia.

Life and Death in the Roman World

This exhibition features objects that have been in storage in the National Museum of Ireland since the early 1920s. The objects were collected primarily in the 19th and early 20th Centuries, not just for public display but also to assist scholars in the study of classical art and architecture. The collection includes glass vessels, textiles, sculpture, ceramics, coins, gemstones and architectural fragments. Introducing the exhibition is a display of Etruscan material followed by an exploration of the themes of 'Everyday Life'; 'Death, Burial and the Afterlife'; 'Religion'; 'Personal Adornment and Dress'; 'Entertainment'; and 'Imperial Power in the Roman world'. The exhibition concludes with the introduction of Christianity.