

TOOLKIT STRUCTURE AND SITE USE:
Results of a High-Power Use-Wear Analysis of Lithic
Assemblages from Solutré (Saône-et-Loire), France

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ABSTRACT

Upper Paleolithic groups used the open-air site of Solutré as a location to intercept and hunt horse and reindeer herds. While it is clear that killing and butchering these animals were the principal site activities, differences in the composition of the recovered lithic assemblages from the different cultural components indicate variability in secondary site activities and lithic tool use over time. A high-power use-wear analysis evaluates the relative extent of the variability in tool use to test this interpretation. The analysis of high-resolution epoxy casts of sampled artifacts is described, use-wear attributes that function as proxy measures of curation are identified, and temporal differences in secondary site activities and toolkit structure are documented. The use-wear results demonstrate that tool function and typology are closely correlated and do not change over time. The results of statistical evaluations of tool use, use-wear curation signatures, and metric attributes indicate that some time periods are characterized by more versatile curated lithic toolkits than others. Temporal differences in toolkit structure and secondary site activities appear to be the result of changes in mobility and changes in how Solutré was incorporated into subsistence systems during the Upper Paleolithic.