
FIRST STEPS

HOW UPRIGHT WALKING
MADE US HUMAN

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HARPER

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ONE INTERPRETATION OF THE HUMAN FAMILY TREE

Paleoanthropologists have discovered and named over twenty-five different kinds of fossil human ancestors and extinct relatives (hominins). Throughout this book, you will meet many of these—presented here by their names and representative fossils. While we know when these hominins lived in time (shown as “Millions of Years Ago” vertically), exactly how they were related to one another remains unclear. Possible relationships are proposed by this tree, though recent fossil and genetic evidence has revealed parts of the human family tree to be an entangled snarl of interconnected branches. Future discoveries are certain, in some ways, to complicate this picture and, in other ways, to simplify it.

