

## Definition: Terminus post quem

---

*Terminus post quem*, Latin for "limit after which," is used to indicate the date after which an artifact must have been deposited. For example, if an archaeological site contains coins dated 1588, 1595, and others dated 1590 - 1625, the *terminus post quem* would be the coin dated 1625, i.e., the latest date obtained from the evidence.

Source:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/archeology/AforI/glossary.htm>

<http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/terminus-post-quem>



Smithsonian  
National Museum of Natural History

This page is part of the Smithsonian's The Secret in the Cellar Webcomic, an educational resource from the Written in Bone exhibition, February 2009 - 2011.