12.001 Introduction to Geology
Spring 2008

Simplified Geological Timeline 12.001 Lindy Elkins-Tanton 2008

1. Memorize names of Eons, Eras, and Periods, along with age boundaries of Eons and Eras
   For extra credit, memorize ages of Periods and names of Epochs
2. Create a mnemonic for the periods. Best mnemonic will win – yes – a prize!

Eon	**Era**	**Period**	**Epoch**
Phanerozoic *(542 Ma to present)*	Cenozoic *(65.5 Ma to present)*	Neogene *(23 Ma to today)*	Holocene *(11,800 years to today)* Pleistocene *(1.8 Ma to 11,800 yrs)* Pliocene *(5.3 to 1.8 Ma)* Miocene *(23 to 5.3 Ma)*
		Paleogene *(65.5 to 23 Ma)*	Oligocene *(34 to 23 Ma)* Eocene *(56 to 34 Ma)* Paleocene *(65.5 to 56 Ma)*
	Mesozoic *(251 to 65.5 Ma)*	Cretaceous *(146 to 66 Ma)* Jurassic *(200 to 146 Ma)* Triassic *(251 to 200 Ma)*	
	Paleozoic *(542 to 251 Ma)*	Permian *(299 to 251 Ma)* Pennsylvanian *(318 to 299 Ma)* Mississippian *(359 to 318 Ma)* Devonian *(416 to 359 Ma)* Silurian *(444 to 416 Ma)* Ordovician *(488 to 444 Ma)* Cambrian *(542 to 488 Ma)*	
Proterozoic *(2,500 to 542 Ma)*			
Archaean *(lower limit not defined, to 2,500 Ma)*			
(Hadean) (Not an official International Commission on Stratigraphy time unit, but commonly used for time before 3,900 Ma)			