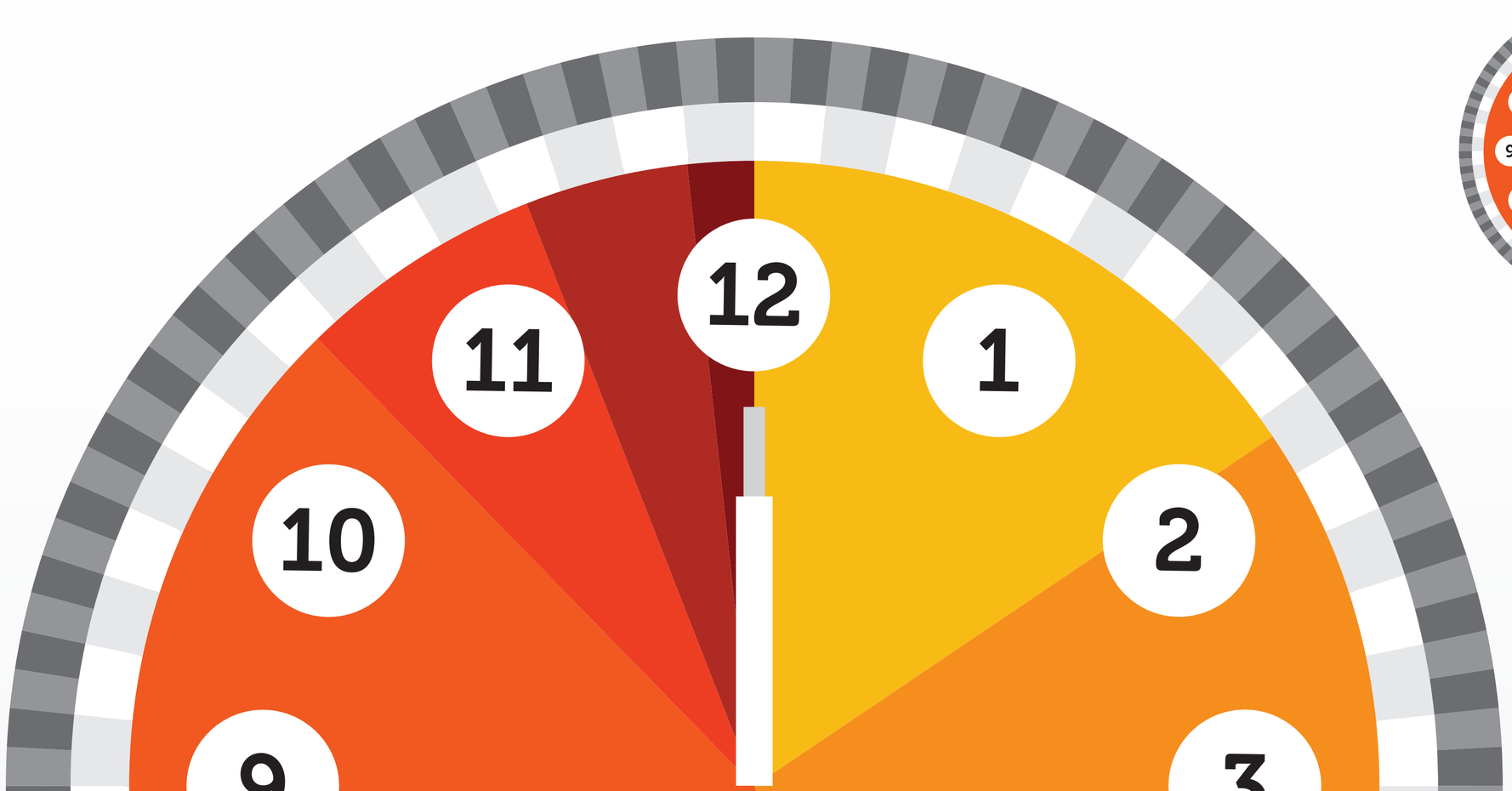
Important events in evolution

Significant events which impacted the history of Earth

4.6 billion years ago
The Earth formed

00:00:00 HRS



The Earth formed 4.6 billion years ago, when supernovae stars that had reached the end of their lives exploded.

These stars produced all the chemical elements we know today, from hydrogen and oxygen to radioactive elements such as uranium and plutonium.

Over time, gravity began to act and condense the clouds of gas and dust. A star appeared in the center: our Sun, surrounded by all the planets.

How do we know the age of the Earth?

In 1953, a young geologist by the name of Clair Patterson decided that, since it was not easy to find the oldest rocks on the planet, the best idea would be to measure the age of a meteorite. Meteorites formed at the same time as the entire solar system. And so he did. He estimated the age of a meteorite that had fallen in Arizona 50,000 years ago and concluded that it was 4.55 billion years old.

This estimate was so accurate, that today we only debate its accuracy to the second or third decimal place.