



# Ancient Greeks



About 2,500 years ago, Greece was one of the most important places in the ancient world. The Greeks were great thinkers, warriors, writers, actors, athletes, artists, architects and politicians.

## Key Knowledge

### The Battle of Marathon

- In 490BC, King Darius wanted to expand the empire so he decided to invade Athens. The commander, Datis, and his fleet of 25,000 sailed to Marathon which was a few miles from Athens. The Athenian army was massively outnumbered!
- The Athenians needed to ask for help! So they decided to ask the Spartans. They sent a runner, Pheidippides, to Sparta to ask. He ran for 2 days and nights from Athens to Sparta, running 240km in total.
- The Spartans were celebrating a festival and so said they would help, only once the festival was over.
- The Athenian army, led by General Miltiades, tried to wait for the Spartan army but they knew they would have to fight on their own, he had to come up with a plan! Heavily outnumbered, Miltiades decided on a risky battle formation. He knew Datis would put his strongest fighters in the middle so Miltiades put his strongest hoplites (soldiers) on the edge, or the flanks. He also knew the Persians had archers, so instructed his men to charge quickly towards the enemy!
- The Persians were shocked at this strategy and Athenian hoplites quickly ran past the line of arrows flying towards them. They charged straight at the Persians! The stronger fighters on the flanks quickly attacked the much weaker Persian soldiers on their flanks. This left the Athenians free to close in and trap the rest of the Persian army. The remaining Persians then ran away to their ships!

### The Battle of Salamis (480 BC)

Battle in the Greco-Persian Wars in which a Greek fleet defeated much larger Persian naval forces in the straits at Salamis, between the island of Salamis and the Athenian port-city of Piraeus. By 480 the Persian king Xerxes and his army had overrun much of Greece, and his navy of about 800 galleys bottled up the smaller Greek fleet of about 370 triremes in the Saronic Gulf. The Greek commander, Themistocles, then lured the Persian fleet into the narrow waters of the strait at Salamis, where the massed Persian ships had difficulty maneuvering. The Greek triremes then attacked furiously, ramming or sinking many Persian vessels and boarding others. The Greeks sank about 300 Persian vessels while losing only about 40 of their own. The rest of the Persian fleet was scattered, and as a result Xerxes had to postpone his planned land offensives for a year, a delay that gave the Greek city-states time to unite against him. The Battle of Salamis was the first great naval battle recorded in history.

### The Trojan War

King Priam of Troy was wealthy and powerful. But his son Paris was invited to judge which of the goddesses Aphrodite, Hera, and Athena was entitled to receive the golden apple marked by the goddess Eris (Discord) "for the most beautiful." Aphrodite promised Paris the most beautiful woman in the world: he therefore awarded her the apple and went to Greece, where he won the love of, and eloped with, Helen, wife of Menelaus, the king of Sparta. To recover Helen, the Greeks launched a great expedition under the overall command of Menelaus's brother, Agamemnon, king of Argos or Mycenae. The Trojans refused to return Helen. Small towns in or near the Troad were sacked by the Greeks, but Troy, assisted by allies from Asia Minor and Thrace, withstood a Greek siege for 10 years. The gods also took sides, notably Hera, Athena, and Poseidon for the Greeks, and Aphrodite (who had a son, Aeneas, by the Trojan Anchises, grandson of Assaracus), Apollo, and Ares for the Trojans.

### The Olympics

Full of blood, passion and extraordinary feats of athletic endeavour, the Olympic Games were the sporting, social and cultural highlight of the Ancient Greek calendar for almost 12 centuries. It is hard for us to exaggerate how important the Olympics were for the Greeks. The Games took place every four years from 776BC to at least 393AD. All free Greek males were allowed to take part, from farmhands to royal heirs, although the majority of Olympians were soldiers. Women could not compete or even attend. The Games lasted a full five days by the fifth century BC and saw running, jumping and throwing events plus boxing, wrestling, pankration and chariot racing. At least 40,000 spectators would have packed the stadium each day at the height of the Games' popularity, in the second century AD, with many more selling their wares outside.




















### Democracy

- Democracy is a fair political system where all adults vote for an elected government. This government then make decisions on how to run the country. Democracy began in Ancient Greece. In fact, the Ancient Greek system is very famous and has helped to shape many systems of democracy around the world today. There were three main systems of democracy in Ancient Greece: The Ekklesia, The Boule and The Dikasteria.

## Key Vocabulary

<b>Achilles</b>	In Greek mythology, Achilles was a hero of the Trojan War, the greatest of all the Greek warriors.	<b>Metic</b>	A foreigner living in an ancient Greek city who had some of the privileges of citizenship.
<b>apollo</b>	Is one of the most important and complex of the Olympian deities in Greek mythology.	<b>Odysseus</b>	A legendary hero in Greek mythology.
<b>Athenian citizens</b>	Only free, adult men enjoyed the rights and responsibility of citizenship.	<b>Olympic Games</b>	Held in Olympia, Greece, from the 8th century BC to the 4th century AD.
<b>Alexander the Great</b>	A king of the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon.	<b>pentekontor</b>	A military commander of fifty men in ancient Greece.
<b>arena</b>	An enclosed area, often circular or oval-shaped, designed to showcase theatre, musical performances, or sporting events.	<b>Persians</b>	People from Persia.
<b>Athens</b>	The capital and largest city of Greece.	<b>Pheidippides</b>	The central figure in the story that inspired a modern sporting event, the marathon race. Pheidippides is said to have run from Marathon to Athens to deliver news of the victory of the battle of Marathon.
<b>Battle of Salamis</b>	A naval battle fought between an alliance of Greek city-states under Themistocles, and the Persian Empire under King Xerxes in 480 BC. It resulted in a decisive victory for the outnumbered Greeks.	<b>Prince Hector</b>	In Greek mythology and Roman mythology, Hector was a Trojan prince and the greatest fighter for Troy in the Trojan War.
<b>Boule</b>	A citizens' council appointed to run daily affairs of a city.	<b>Prince Paris</b>	The son of King Priam and Queen Hecuba of Troy, appears in a number of Greek legends.
<b>Datis</b>	A Median admiral who served the Persian Empire, under Darius the Great.	<b>Sparta</b>	A prominent city-state in ancient Greece.
<b>Democracy</b>	A government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.	<b>Themistocles</b>	An Athenian politician and general.
<b>Dikasteria</b>	A judicial body in ancient Athens.	<b>The Battle of Thermopylae</b>	Fought between an alliance of Greek city-states, led by King Leonidas I of Sparta, and the Achaemenid Empire of Xerxes I over the course of three days, during the second Persian invasion of Greece.
<b>Ekklesia</b>	The principal assembly of ancient Athens during its Golden Age.	<b>Trireme</b>	An ancient vessel and a type of galley.
<b>fleet</b>	A country's navy.	<b>Trojans</b>	Of or from the ancient city of Troy
<b>General Miltiades</b>	A Greek Athenian citizen known mostly for his role in the Battle of Marathon, as well as for his downfall afterwards.	<b>Trojan War</b>	In Greek mythology, the Trojan War was waged against the city of Troy by the Achaeans (Greeks) after Paris of Troy took Helen from her husband Menelaus, king of Sparta.
<b>jurors</b>	A member of a jury.	<b>Troy</b>	A city that was besieged for 10 years and eventually conquered by a Greek army led by King Agamemnon.
<b>Menelaus</b>	A king of Mycenaean Sparta, the husband of Helen of Troy, and the son of Atreus and Aerope.	<b>Xerxes</b>	The fifth king of kings of the Achaemenid dynasty of Persia.



																			
Stone Age	Ancient Egypt	Mayans	The Shang Dynasty	Celts	Ancient Greeks	Romans	Anglo-Saxons	Vikings	Riotous Royals	Christopher Columbus	Queen Elizabeth I	The Great Fire of London	Florence Nightingale	The Coming of the Railways West Byfleet	The Shah Jahan Mosque	20th Century Entertainment	Queen Elizabeth II Coronation	Moon Landing	History in the Locality
10,000 BC	7,500BC	2600BC	1766 BC	750BC	700BC	AD43	AD449	793	1066	1492	1559	1666	1820	1887	1889	1900	1953	1969	2012
Year 6	Year 3	Year 5	Year 4	Year 3	Year 6	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 4	Year 1	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2	Year 3	Year 5	Year 6	Year 1	Year 1	Year 2