



# ANCIENT GREEK ART



## GREEK ART TIMELINE

Greek Art is seen to have 4 main art periods after 900BC:  
Geometric, Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic.

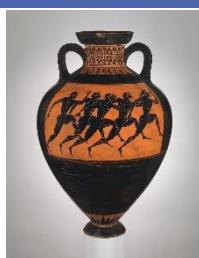


## GEOMETRIC PERIOD (900-100BC)

Many patterns were repetitive and simplistic with few animal or human forms. Firing terracotta vases, casting bronze works, engraving gems and working gold were the most common forms of art in this time. The most famous vessels from this period uses a technique called *horror vacui* (Latin meaning 'fear of empty space'), in which every space of the surface is filled with imagery, often constructed from a single continuous line.



## THE ARCHAIC PERIOD (700-480BC)



This period saw new methods and tools making works more colourful and ornate with glazing. Their vases indicated the Greek culture representing daily life, warfare, athletics (the Olympic games had traditionally begun during this period), religion and mythology. Greeks began to try and recreate realistic human forms using the black-figure technique. The figures and designs were added using a slip mixture which turned black when fired at a high temperature in a kiln. Some attempts at sculpture began to appear.

## THE CLASSICAL PERIOD (480 -323BC)

This period saw bronze become a popular medium for statues, though not many survived. The red-figure technique superseded the black, and the human form became more realistic - clothed or naked. The red figure technique was achieved by using the opposite method to the black-figure technique – in this case, the slip was applied to the background and space around the figures. The ornate Corinthian designs within architecture became popular and great feats of architecture were erected, such as the marble Parthenon dedicated to Athena. Artistic schools were developed and seen as important institutions.





## HELLENISTIC PERIOD (321-31BC)



After Alexander the Great led his armies to conquer much of the world, artists were influenced by new styles. Many pieces of art and sculpture showed religious influence, especially with representations of Gods becoming popular.

Non-traditional representations of grotesques (ugly distorted figures) were made. Furthermore, more every day, regular subjects such as children were created.

The Romans had become avid collectors of Greek art by this time.

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## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. How many main periods of ancient Greek art are they?
2. What does *horror vacui* mean?
3. What new method was introduced in the Archaic period?
4. What kind of schools opened in the Classical period?
5. What time frame covers the Hellenistic period?