



ANCIENT GREEK DANCE

Dance was an important part of life in Ancient Greece. It was used to honour the gods, celebrate special events, tell stories and express joy. Everyone—from children to adults—took part in dancing.

WHY DID THE GREEKS DANCE?

- To honour the gods during religious festivals and ceremonies.
- To celebrate victories after sporting festivals such as the Olympic Games.
- To entertain people in theatres and at banquets.
- To express joy on special occasions such as weddings.
- To tell stories and myths through movement.



TYPES OF DANCE



Religious Dances

Performed in honour of the gods. Often part of festivals with music, singing and offerings.



Pyrrhic (War) Dance

Energetic dances that trained soldiers and celebrated courage and victory.



Social Dances

Enjoyed at banquets and parties. People danced in groups, holding hands or forming circles.



Theatrical Dances

Used in plays to show emotions and help tell the story.

DANCE AND MUSIC



Music was always part of Greek dance. Instruments such as the lyre, aulos (double pipe), and tympanon (frame drum) kept the rhythm.

Dancers moved to the beat, often in time with singing.

Poets and musicians sometimes created songs especially for dances.

HOW PEOPLE DANCED

- Dances were usually performed in groups or circles.
- Movements could be slow and graceful or fast and energetic.
- Dancers used steps, turns, jumps and gestures with their arms and hands.
- Clothing was made from light fabric that flowed as they moved.



WHO DANCED?

Men, women and children all took part in dances. Some dances were taught to children as part of their education.



FAMOUS DANCE STYLES



Pyrrhic Dance

A fast war dance performed by armed dancers. It copied battle movements and helped train soldiers.

Choral Dance



A group dance performed by a chorus in theatre. It helped tell the story and comment on the action.

DID YOU KNOW?



Victories at the Olympic Games were celebrated with music and dance.

Dance was believed to be a gift from the gods. The Muses—nine goddesses of inspiration—were said to inspire dancers and musicians alike.



DANCE IN THEATRE



In Greek tragedies and comedies, the chorus danced and sang together. Their movements and songs helped the audience understand the story and the feelings of the characters.



Dance brought people together, celebrated life and honoured the gods. It was a joyful and important part of Ancient Greek culture.