

Ancient Greek fashion and frieze photoshoot

Ever wonder what Ancient Greek fashion was like? What did they wear in day-to-day lives?

In this activity, you can discover what the Greeks wore, specifically the CHITON. Afterward, you can take a 'frieze' photoshoot in your Ancient Greek attire, posing like a mythological character frozen in stone. Then you can share this online and show everyone your amazing ancient outfit...

What did the Ancient Greeks wear?

The Ancient Greeks were creative with simple sheets! A common piece of Ancient Greek clothing was the **CHITON**, worn by both men and women. It is a piece of linen or wool fastened at the shoulders and tied with a belt. Depictions of Ancient Greek fashion can be seen in visual art and artefacts such as figurines, sculptures, pottery, and friezes.



Fashion through artefacts: a clay figurine of a lady wearing a peplos, a woman's dress, c. 449-440 BCE (Classical).

Bristol Museums (Fa56).

The CHITON



You will need:

- An **adult** to help put on the chiton. It may get complicated!
- A large **rectangular sheet**, ideally a little bit longer than your height and twice the length of your arms spread out
- Two or more **safety pins**
- A **belt, rope, ribbon, or long & thin scarf**

The instructions are the same for both men and women.

Let's get started!

STEP 1 - FOLDING

Wrap the sheet around your body above the shoulders. Excess fabric is all right, but if you feel like it is too long you can shorten it by holding it at the top. Women tend to have full-length chitons while men wear theirs shorter.



Hold the sheet from the top with both hands: one hand should be holding the two corners and the other should be holding the folded middle.



STEP 2 – ARMHOLES & PINNING

Create the armholes by pinning the front and back of the sheet over your shoulders; now you have one sleeve on the open side. Then, bring your arm which should be inside the sheet through the arm hole you have created with the pin. You can use more pins to secure the sleeves.



STEP 3 - FOLDING

Once the sleeves are comfortably in place, you can take your *zoster* or belt of choice and tie it at your waist (low-girdled) or under your chest (high-girdled).

To create the draping blouse effect and shorten the chiton, pull on the fabric above the *zoster* until it folds over.



STEP 4 – FINAL TOUCHES

For security, you can put a safety pin in the places where the *chiton* may be loose, like the sleeves and the open side. If you want, you can readjust the length by folding it.

And that's all!

NOW YOU'RE DRESSED UP LIKE AN ANCIENT GREEK!

For the frieze photoshoot, move onto the next page...

Time for a Frieze Photoshoot!

We can learn much about Ancient Greek culture through their visual artwork, such as pottery vessels and friezes. Friezes in architecture are long, decorative panels, or strips of scenes, on the walls of a building. Friezes can depict flora and fauna, or mythological and legendary episodes of Ancient Greek history. Think of it as an ancient stone comic strip on a temple! Bristol Museum & Art Gallery has its own Ancient Greek-style friezes both inside and outside the building.

Look at these dramatic scenes of friezes in Greek architecture.



Apollo and Artemis chasing a giant during the Gigantomachy (War of the Giants) in the frieze from the Siphnian Treasury at the Sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi, c. 530 BC.

Ricardo André Frantz (User:Tetraktys), CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

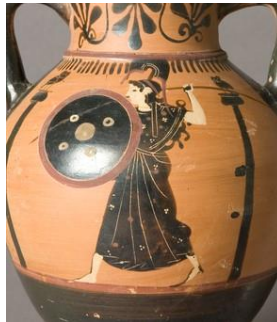


Part of the Amazon Frieze at the Mausoleum of Halikarnassos. It represents combat between Greeks and Amazons. Displayed at the British Museum (1865,0723).

Now choose a figure and try out their poses yourself!

Need more inspiration?

Choose your favourite Greek myth, deity or hero.



Grab any **prop** that you can find... a bunch of grapes for Dionysus? A toy sword? Stuffed animals: a snake for Medusa, an owl for Athena, a lion on your head as Hercules?

Strike your best Ancient Greek pose and start snapping!

Bring the stories from stone to life...

Ask your friends and family to dress-up and together recreate a whole frieze!

Think of your favourite scenes in Ancient Greek myth and history. Here are some ideas:

- The Trojan War
- Jason and the Argonauts
- Perseus and Medusa
- The Minotaur
- Odysseus' Adventures
- Pandora's Box

Why not share your creativity?

Ask your parents or your school to share your frieze photoshoots with us on social media.

Tag us **@BristolMuseums** on Instagram, or **@Brismuseumlearn** on Twitter and upload your photos under the hashtags:

#FriezePhotoshoot #GreekWeek #BristolMuseums