

# LOOKING GOOD

**C**lothes for Greek men, women and children were all made from a single piece of cloth wrapped round the body and held in place by pins. Underneath, some men wore a loincloth, and some women covered their chest with a soft cloth band. But most Greeks wore no underwear at all!

Clothes for men and children were usually knee-length. Women's clothes reached the floor, and so did robes for priests and kings. Most cloth was woven at home, from sheep's wool, by wives, mothers and female slaves.

Fancy cloth woven from Chinese silk and dyed purple with 'murex' (rotted shellfish) was worn by rich, powerful people. It could be bought at markets for a high price. But some scholars deliberately wore old, shabby clothes as a sign that they were thinking of more important things.

One famous philosopher, Diogenes (about 400–325 BC), gave up clothes altogether and lived in a big pottery jar.

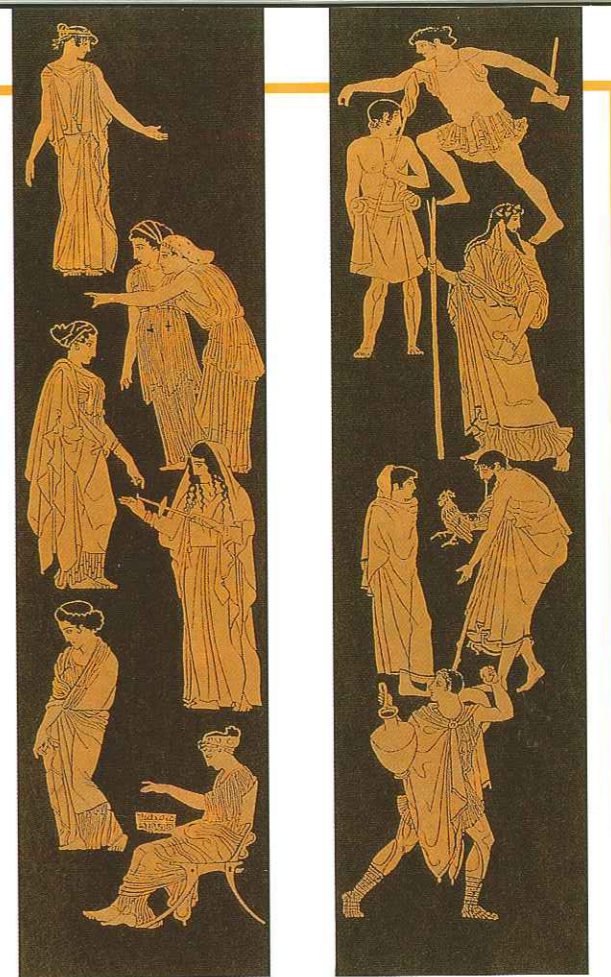


Rich women wore beautiful jewellery made from rare, precious gold, like these earrings made around 250 BC. They might also be buried in special 'funeral jewellery', made from thin gold sheet, shaped into leaves and flowers, which were signs of rebirth.

Greek women painted their faces with make-up and used hair dye and perfume. They let their hair grow long and tied it back with ribbons or jewelled headbands. Men had short hair and neatly trimmed beards. Slaves had their hair cut very short to show they were not free.

► As you can see from these copies of vase-paintings, clothes for Greek men, women and children were all the same basic shape – a loose tube!

▼ Greek women (and men!) liked to wear perfume and scented body powder. A few men used make-up and hair-dye, too. This perfume-flask, made around 500 BC, is shaped like the head of a helmeted soldier.



## MAN-SIZED MEASUREMENTS

The ancient Greeks measured length and distance in units based on an average-sized adult man.

- 1 finger = almost 2 cm
- 4 fingers = 1 palm = 7.5 cm
- 12 fingers = 1 hand-span = 22.5 cm
- 16 fingers = 1 foot = 30 cm
- 24 fingers = 1 cubit = 46 cm
- 2.5 feet = 1 pace = 75 cm
- 6 feet = 1 stretch (both arms) = 1.8m
- 600 feet = 1 stadion = 178m