

Greece fact file



1. The first evidence of people living in the region date back to 270 000 BC on the Chalkidiki peninsula. Greece is considered as the cradle of Western civilisation. Kingdoms and city states, so called polis, spread across the region from about 800 BC. The first Olympic games were held in 776 BC. The Athenian Empire was at its peak around 450 BC, this is when many of the Greek monuments were built. Greece is one of the earlier members of the European community, joining in 1981 in what today is the European Union.

2. The country shares land borders with four countries: Albania, North Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey. Please note that the name Macedonia was disputed by Greece and the country to the north of Greece changed its name to North Macedonia in February 2019!



3. Greece is a mountainous country as you can see on the map. Mountains cover 80% of the country. The two major mountain ranges are the Pindus and the Taurus mountains.

Greece is located in the Mediterranean Sea. The Greek coastline borders the Ionian Sea and the Aegean Sea as well as the Libyan and Crete Seas in the south.



The country consists of the mainland with two peninsulas Peloponnese (in the southwest) and Chalkidiki (in the northeast). Greece also includes an archipelago of about 6 000 islands with Crete being the largest island.

Greece has a mild and temperate climate with wet and colder winters and hot and dry summers.

Greece is slightly smaller in size than the state of Alabama/USA.

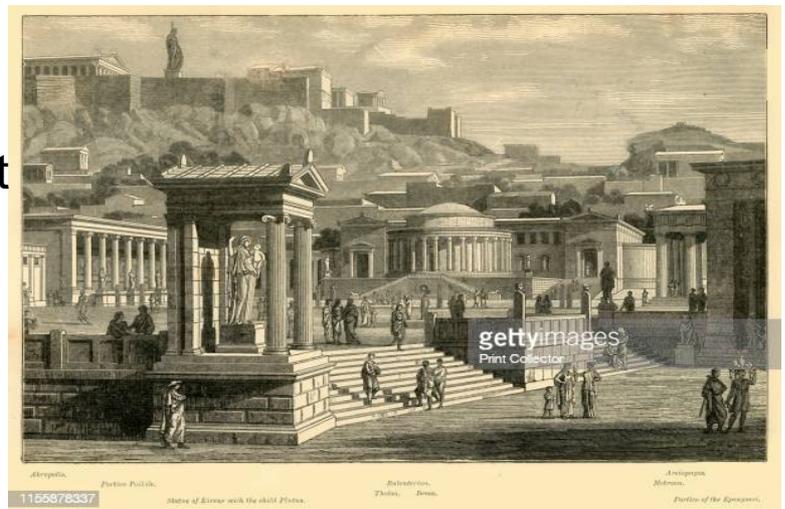
Ancient Greece

1. Ancient Greeks lived over 3000 years ago. Their civilisations followed a Dark Age in Greece, which is thought to have ended in 800 B.C. For the most part, Ancient Greece was divided into several small city-states, each with their own laws, customs, and rulers. However, in the 300s B.C., these small city-states were forced to unite under one ruler: Alexander the Great. He was the founder of the Ancient Greek Empire, which stretched into Europe, Egypt, and South-West Asia.



Did you know that the Ancient Greeks invented the theatre? They loved watching plays, and most cities had a theatre – some big enough to hold 15,000 people! Only men and boys were allowed to be actors, and they wore masks, which showed the audience whether their character was happy or sad. Some of the masks had two sides, so the actor could turn them around to change the mood for each scene.

The Classical Period began with the introduction of democracy in Athens. Athens also rose to new heights in art and philosophy. It was during this period that Athens and Sparta fought in the Peloponnesian Wars. Near the end of the Classical Period Alexander the Great rose to power conquering much of Europe and Western Asia.



Ancient Greece

700BC
Homer writes the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* poems.

650BC
The tyrant Kypselos takes over the city-state of Corinth. When Kypselos dies, his son Periander takes over the role.

500BC
The 'Classical Period' starts. There is a lot of interest in arts, imagination and buildings.

460BC
Hippocrates, the 'father of modern medicine' is born in Kos. His ideas on the human body and medicine are still used and recognised today.

336BC
Alexander the Great takes over rule of Greece, aged 20, after the death of his father king Philip II.

338BC
King Philip II of Macedonia takes control of Greece.

776BC
The first Olympic games. The games are then held every 4 years in honour of the god Zeus (ruler of the Olympians of Mount Olympus). The games included wrestling, javelin, jumping and chariot racing.

508BC
Male citizens of Athens are given a chance to vote in order to decide how things should be run. This is called 'democracy' and is thought to be one of the Greeks' greatest ideas.

472BC
Greek theatres become popular in Athens. The entertainment included magicians, jugglers and plays.

432BC
Parthenon is finished in Athens. The temple is built to house a statue of Athena, the goddess of war, wisdom and the arts.

146BC
Rome conquers the Corinthians at the Battle of Corinth and Greece falls under the rule of the Roman Empire.

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