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**Athena** is an [ancient Greek goddess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_religion) associated with wisdom, handicraft, and warfare.  Athena was regarded as the patron and protectress of various cities across Greece, particularly the city of [Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens), from which she most likely received her name. She's usually shown in art wearing a helmet and holding a spear. Her major symbols include the owl.

From her origin as an Aegean [palace goddess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tutelary_deity), Athena was closely associated with the city. Her temples were usually located atop the fortified [acropolis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acropolis) in the central part of the city. The [Parthenon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenon) on the [Athenian Acropolis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athenian_Acropolis) is dedicated to her, She's also a [warrior goddess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_ancient_warfare), and was believed to lead soldiers into battle as [*Athena Promachos*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athena_Promachos).

Athena was the patron goddess of heroic endeavour; she was believed to have aided the heroes [Perseus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perseus), [Heracles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heracles), [Bellerophon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bellerophon), and [Jason](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jason). Along with [Aphrodite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aphrodite) and [Hera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hera).

She plays an active role in the [*Iliad*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iliad), in which she assists the [Achaeans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaeans_(Homer)) and, in the [*Odyssey*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odyssey)*.* She is the divine counsellor to [Odysseus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odysseus).

Since the [Renaissance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance), Athena has become an international symbol of **wisdom,** the arts**, and**[**classical learning**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classics)**.**

Western artists and [allegorists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegorists) have often used Athena **as a symbol of**[**freedom**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom)**and**[**democracy**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy)**.**