

LEARN MORE

# GREEK COINAGE

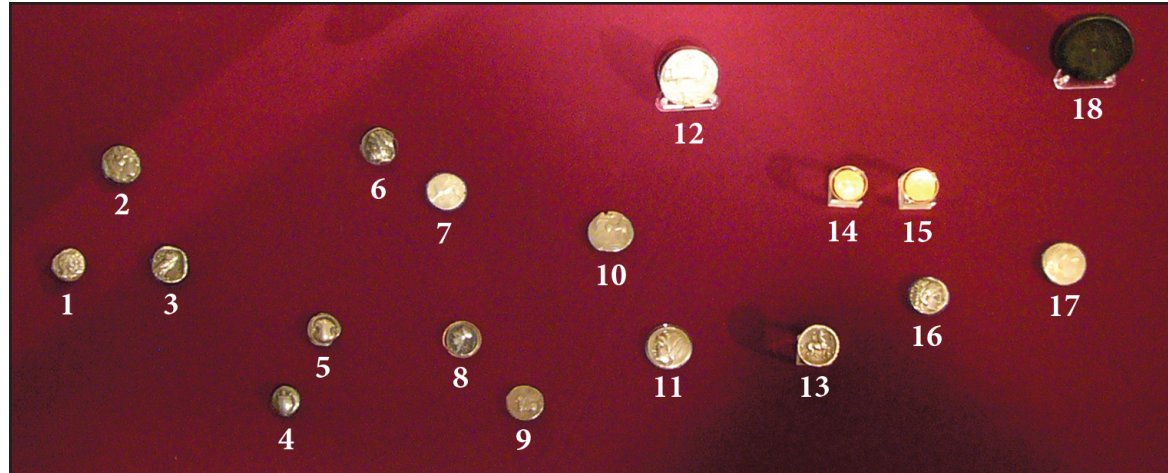


The earliest Greek coins had images only on one side, most often associated with the patron god of the city or a pun on the city name. As time went on, the images became more varied; first by the addition of a design on the reverse of the coin, then by the addition of legends identifying the issuing city and supporting images that often identified the magistrate responsible for the coinage. The stage was now set for Alexander the Great and the creation of the first integrated Imperial coinage.

## DID YOU KNOW?

*The coins of ancient Athens — nicknamed “owls” — had an image of the Goddess Athena on one side and an Owl on the other. Athena — the Greek goddess of wisdom, war, the arts, industry, justice and skill — was the patron goddess and namesake of Athens. Athena was believed to take the form of an owl at times, the root of the modern idea that owls are wise.*





1. Greece, Athens, 482-480 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 1989.100.13  
**Obverse:** Helmeted head of Athena right  
**Reverse:** Owl with crescent and olive spray to left of head, all within incuse square  
*The Athenian tetradrachm, known as the "owl," was one of the earliest world trade coinages. The coins were used throughout the Mediterranean and beyond into Afghanistan and India.*
2. Greece, Athens, 449-413 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 1981.195.24  
**Obverse:** Helmeted head of Athena  
**Reverse:** Owl with crescent and olive spray behind
3. Greece, Athens, 449-413 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 1972.25.29  
**Obverse:** Helmeted head of Athena right  
**Reverse:** Owl with crescent and olive spray behind
4. Greece, Thebes, 425-400 B.C. Silver Stater  
ANA Collection 1972.25.6  
**Obverse:** Boeotian shield  
**Reverse:** Amphora in incuse square
5. Greece, Aegina, 625-490 B.C. Silver Stater  
ANA Collection 1972.25.32  
**Obverse:** Sea Turtle  
**Reverse:** Incuse square of four triangles  
*The island of Aegina produced the earliest coins in Greece.*
6. Greece, Olympia, Peloponnesus, 4th Century B.C. Silver Stater  
ANA Collection 1978.52.62  
**Obverse:** Diademed head of Zeus  
**Reverse:** Eagle standing with wings closed
7. Greece, Sikyon, 430-390 B.C. Silver Stater  
ANA Collection 1989.100.6  
**Obverse:** Chimaera  
**Reverse:** Dove flying within laurel wreath
8. Greece, Corinth, 338-300 B.C. Silver Stater  
ANA Collection 1972.25.36  
**Obverse:** Helmeted head of Athena  
**Reverse:** Pegasus flying, pointed wing type  
*Corinthian staters, known as "colts," were an important trade coinage in the western Mediterranean.*
9. Greece, Corinth, 430-415 B.C. Silver Stater  
ANA Collection 1972.25.35  
**Obverse:** Helmeted Athena with flying Victory  
**Reverse:** Pegasus flying
10. Greece, Sicily (Messana), 480-460 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 1972.25.10  
**Obverse:** Running hare  
**Reverse:** Chariot with horses, crowned by flying Victory
11. Sicily, Syracuse, 275-215 B.C. Silver 16 Litra  
ANA Collection 2001.17.1  
**Obverse:** Queen Philistis  
**Reverse:** Galloping quadriga with Nike as charioteer
12. Sicily, Syracuse, c. 410 BC. Silver Decadrachm  
ANA Collection 1994.44.1  
**Obverse:** Galloping quadriga with charioteer being crowned by Nike  
**Reverse:** Head of Artemis-Arethusa, hair bound with wreath, four dolphins, signed by engraver
13. Greece, Macedon, Philip II, 359-336 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 1972.25.12  
**Obverse:** Head of Zeus  
**Reverse:** Naked youth riding horse with palm branch in hand
14. Greece, Macedon, Alexander III "The Great," 336-323 B.C. Gold Stater  
ANA Collection 1998.12.1  
**Obverse:** Helmeted head of Athena  
**Reverse:** Nike standing, holding wreath and ship's mast
15. Greece, Macedon, Alexander III "The Great," 336-323 B.C. Gold Stater  
ANA Collection 1998.12.2  
**Obverse:** Head of Athena  
**Reverse:** Nike walking
16. Greece, Macedon, Alexander III "The Great," 336-323 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 2006.1.50  
**Obverse:** Head of Herakles wearing lion skin  
**Reverse:** Seated Zeus with eagle in hand
17. Egypt, Ptolemy I, 305-283 B.C. Silver Tetradrachm  
ANA Collection 1998.12.3  
**Obverse:** Head of Alexander in elephant skin headdress  
**Reverse:** Athena Alkidemos advancing right with spear and shield
18. Egypt, Ptolemy II, 285-246 B.C. Bronze 47 mm  
ANA Collection 1996.62.4  
**Obverse:** Diademed head of Zeus  
**Reverse:** Eagle standing on thunderbolt with open wings

*The coins of Alexander were struck with the same designs and weight standards throughout his vast empire.*