

GREEK VASES ARE FAMOUS for their many shapes and their decorative paintings. In fact much of what we know about the ancient Greeks is derived from studying pottery shapes, what they were used for, and the images found on them. Scenes of everyday life and of deities, monsters, and heroes abound in amazing detail. Many Greek painters became so skilled that they could "tell" stories through painting. Ancient Athenian vases were made out of a beautiful red clay. Athenian **black-figure pottery** gets its name from the technique of silhouetting human and animal figures with blackglaze painted on the red clay. The glazes were applied sometimes in many layers which gave a beautiful lustrous finish. Once the glazes are dry, but before the pots are fired, the artist incised the silhouetted figures with lines to show details. These incisions cut through to the bright red clay and contrasted against the rich black. Painters in the black-figure style often added small accents to their paintings with a cream colored white glaze. The Carlos Museum has many beautiful examples of this technique in its collection. Among them are a **hydria** or water jar, a masterpiece depicting scenes from the life of the Greek hero, **Herakles**.



Black-figure Hydria (Water jar) with Scenes of Herakles Painted in the Manner of the Antimenes Painter

Greek, Attic, Late Archaic Period, ca 520-510 B.C. Terracotta

Materials

- a clay pot
- pencils
- markers
- Greek black-figure animal design and pattern sheet

How to:

Please read through all of the steps before you begin.

- Step 1. Choose a pot.
- Step 2. In pencil draw Greek patterns around the lip and base of the pot. Use the design sheet on the back or create line patterns of repeated shapes or images. Repeat the pattern all the way around the pot.
- Step 3. Draw an animal that you like in profile on the side of the pot. Create your own design or use the sheet on the back for ideas. Notice how the drawings have white detail lines. When drawing create areas of open line-work which will show red on the pot.
- Step 4. Go over your pencil lines with black markers.
- Step 5. Fill within the shapes with black markers.
- Step 6. Enjoy your pot, by planting a flower in it, using it for a pencil cup or whatever you can think of.



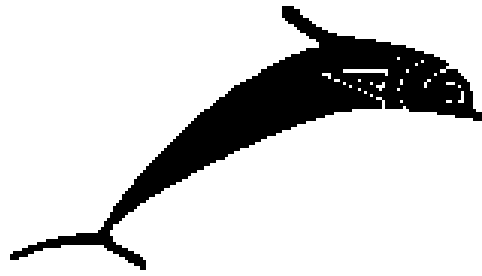
Step 1.



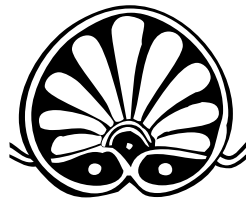
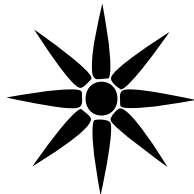
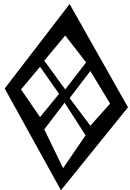
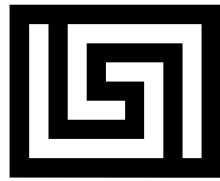
Step 2.



Steps 3-5.



Greek pottery figures



Greek pottery patterns

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