

Statues, Statuettes and Figurines

Statues, statuettes and figurines are carved or cast three-dimensional sculptures that often show the human form. They are made to celebrate or commemorate significant people and events.

Statues

A statue is a three-dimensional representation of a person, animal or mythical being. It is usually the same size as the person or animal in real life or much larger. Most statues are displayed outdoors, so artists make them from durable materials, including stone or metal, such as marble or bronze.



Statue of Liberty (Liberty Enlightening the World)

Statuettes and figurines

A statuette or figurine is a small statue, much smaller than life-size, representing one or more people or animals, or sometimes a religious deity. Most are ornaments displayed indoors, so artists do not need to make them resistant to the weather. They make them from materials, such as clay, wood and bronze.



Porcelain figurine

Ancient sculpture

The making of statues, statuettes and figurines is an ancient craft. It was an important part of the culture of past civilisations, including ancient Sumer, ancient Egypt and the Indus Valley. The sculptures made by these civilisations include important people, such as monarchs and religious deities. They also tell us about the everyday lives of the people who were part of these ancient civilisations and the things that were important to them.



Ancient Egyptian figurines

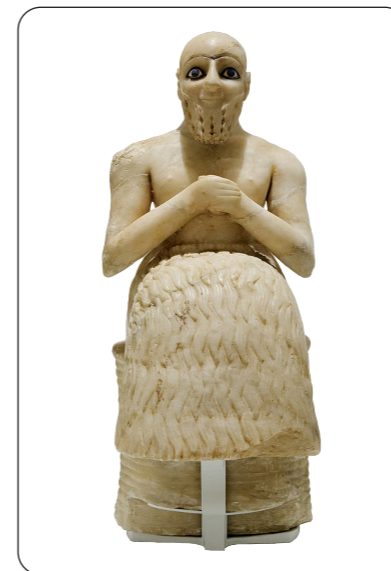


Indus Valley statuette

Ancient Sumerian statuettes and figurines

Ancient Sumerian craftspeople created many statuettes and figurines. They were an important part of life, often made for religious purposes. They were made from clay, which was a plentiful material found in the soil.

Statuettes and figurines had common features, including inlaid eyes and clasped hands. Male heads were often bald with beards, while female figures had varied hairstyles or headdresses.



Ancient Sumerian statuette

Figure drawing

A figure drawing is a drawing of the human form in any posture using any drawing media. Figure drawing can include quick line sketches that are not detailed or accurate or highly-detailed drawings that are anatomically correct.



Clay skills

Slabbing clay involves rolling out flat pieces of clay using a rolling pin. The pieces are then joined to construct an object or sculpture.

Wire frames help sculptors to make clay models. Soft wire is twisted and shaped before clay is moulded to the frame.

Clay pieces can be joined by scoring and adding slip, a runny mixture of clay and water.

Glossary

anatomical	Related to the structure of the human body and how its parts are arranged.
cast	To shape a substance by adding it to a mould and leaving it to harden.
inlaid	A decorative pattern set into the surface of something.
porcelain	A hard, white ceramic made partly from clay.
score	To make a cut or mark on the surface of something with a pointed tool.