

ARES

Ares ([Ancient Greek](#): Ἄρης [áɾɛːs], [Modern Greek](#): Ἄρης [ˈaris]), [Doric Greek](#): Ἄρα [ára] is the [Greek god of war](#). He is one of the [Twelve Olympians](#), and the son of [Zeus](#) and [Hera](#).^[1] In [Greek literature](#), he often represents the physical or violent and untamed aspect of war, in contrast to the armored [Athena](#), whose functions as a [goddess of intelligence](#) include [military strategy](#) and [generalship](#).^[2]

The Greeks were [ambivalent](#) toward Ares: although he embodied the physical valor necessary for success in war, he was a dangerous force, "overwhelming, insatiable in battle, destructive, and man-slaughtering."^[3] Fear ([Phobos](#)) and Terror ([Deimos](#)) were yoked to his battle [chariot](#).^[4] In the [Iliad](#), his father Zeus tells him that he is the god most hateful to him.^[5] An association with Ares endows places and objects with a savage, dangerous, or militarized quality.^[6] His value as a war god is placed in doubt: during the [Trojan War](#), Ares was on the losing side, while Athena, often depicted in [Greek art](#) as holding [Nike \(Victory\)](#) in her hand, favored the triumphant Greeks.^[7]

Ares plays a relatively limited role in [Greek mythology](#) as represented in literary narratives, though his numerous love affairs and abundant offspring are often [alluded](#) to.^[8] When Ares does appear in myths, he typically faces humiliation.^[9] He is well known as the lover of [Aphrodite](#), the goddess of love, who was married to [Hephaestus](#), god of craftsmanship.^[10] The most famous story related to Ares and Aphrodite shows them exposed to ridicule through the wronged husband's clever device.^[11]

The Iliad

In the [Iliad](#),^[51] [Homer](#) represented Ares as having no fixed allegiances, rewarding courage on both sides: he promised Athena and Hera that he would fight on the side of the [Achaean](#)s (*Iliad* V.830–834, XXI.410–414), but [Aphrodite](#) persuaded Ares to side with the [Trojans](#). During the war, [Diomedes](#) fought with [Hector](#) and saw Ares fighting on the Trojans' side. Diomedes called for his soldiers to fall back slowly (V.590–605).

Athene, or Athena, Ares's sister, saw his interference and asked Zeus, his father, for permission to drive Ares away from the battlefield, which Zeus granted (V.711–769). Hera and Athena encouraged Diomedes to attack Ares (V.780–834). Diomedes thrust with his spear at Ares, with Athena driving it home, and Ares' cries made Achaeans and Trojans alike tremble (V.855–864). Ares fled to [Mt. Olympus](#), forcing the Trojans to fall back.

When Hera mentioned to [Zeus](#) that Ares' son, Ascalaphus, was killed, Ares overheard and wanted to join the fight on the side of the Achaeans, disregarding Zeus' order that no Olympic god should enter the battle, but Athena stopped him (XV.110–128). Later, when Zeus allowed the gods to fight in the war again (XX.20–29), Ares was the first to act, attacking Athena to avenge himself for his previous injury. Athena overpowered him by striking Ares with a boulder (XXI.391–408).

(Source: Wikipedia. "Ares.")

