



# Historically Speaking

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## Climate and Seasons

**A**ncient Greece had a Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. This climate influenced everything from their agriculture, which focused on crops like olives and grapes, to their architecture and clothing, which were adapted for warmth and sunlight. Water management, including aqueducts and communal wells, was crucial due to the dry summers.

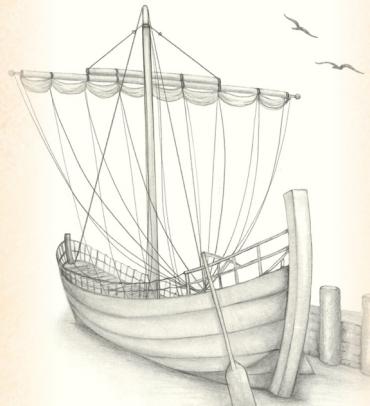
Mythologically speaking, Spring is when Persephone came back from the underworld, Summer was when Persephone was with her mother, Demeter, and Demeter wasn't sad or angry. Winter was when Persephone was in the underworld with Hades and Demeter would be sad and angry and make the earth barren.

As with virtually all pre-industrialized societies, the daily arc of the sun dictated the rhythms and patterns of everyday life in ancient Athens. In the summer season, which ran from July to early October, the city's inhabitants would rise long before dawn to take advantage of the cooler morning hours. In the early morning light, the Agora, the beating heart of public life, would be abuzz with merchants selling their wares, philosophers engaging in debates, and citizens discussing the latest round of politics. The hustle and bustle would peak in the mid- to late-morning before the intense afternoon heat set in.

During the hottest part of the day, many Athenians would retreat indoors for a midday rest, a practice not unlike the modern "siesta." Without the luxury of air conditioning or ceiling fans, they had to be creative in coping with the heat. Thanks to well-preserved archaeological remains, we know that the design of their homes played a crucial role in keeping cool during the scorching summer months.

The climate of Greece is remarkable for the hot sun and the heavy rains, factors probably answerable for the porticoes which were important features of the temples.

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### What's happening?

I am pleased to report that the craft fair at University High School was very successful for us. My wife sold a quilt and several sewing items. My sister, Roseanne, sold some of her very creative knitted items. I sold 12 books and many wood items including ALL 50 squirrel oven rack push-pulls. We were very pleased with that event. We will be doing the Ridgeline Craft Fair next, December 6 and 7. I have 50 more squirrels ready to go. Quilts, pot holders, aprons, knitted Barbie doll clothes and knitted pictures, knitted Santas and so much more will be available there.

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Greece enjoyed a position intermediate between the rigorous surroundings of the Northern nations and the relaxing conditions of Eastern life. Hence the Greek character combined the activity of the North with the passivity of the East in a way that led to the growth of a unique civilization. The Mediterranean climate brings hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters, commonly with enough rainfall to make farming without irrigation possible. Away from the sea the climate is more extreme, with hotter summers and colder winters. The Temperatures averaged about 75 F in summer. The Mediterranean waters and a north-westerly breeze, known as the Etesian, kept temperatures at a comfortable level. In the winter, temperatures again were influenced by the surrounding water. Typically temperatures did not go below with the exceptions in the high mountains. In the mountains, snow was typical during the wet winter months. The average yearly rainfall ranged from twenty to fifty inches, with the majority coming during the winter months. Greece typically experienced a large amount of sunny days during the year.

Ancient Egypt had a climate that varied over time, starting with a much wetter, savanna-like environment during the Predynastic period before shifting to the hot, dry desert climate that is characteristic of the region today. Throughout its history, the climate has been hot and arid, with very little rainfall except for a winter rainy season in the northern parts of the country, but there have also been periods of significant drought that caused famine and contributed to social unrest.

Prior to its famous desert state, Ancient Egypt experienced a wetter, greener climate with more vegetation, especially around the Nile.

Large regions were covered in savanna, supporting grazing animals and more prolific plant life, which made hunting a more common activity.

The Nile River's annual flood was crucial for agriculture, depositing nutrient-rich silt that made crops possible in the arid environment.

Ancient Egyptians developed complex irrigation systems and lived an outdoor lifestyle to cope with the climate, building their settlements along the Nile River.

Being surrounded by desert provided Egypt with some security against attacks. Any army that wanted to attack would have had a long, hot walk if invading from the east or the west.

The desert around ancient Egypt was inhabited by many different animals that were hunted by the ancient Egyptians for food. These animals included gazelles, hares and foxes. The desert was also the source of minerals, rocks and metals, which the Egyptians used for building houses, pyramids, statues and tombs, and making weapons and jewellery. The ancient Egyptians were able to trade many of these resources, as well as the products they made from them.

Living in a very hot and dry climate, the ancient Egyptians mostly lived an outdoors lifestyle. Most of them worked outside as farmers, fishers, builders and merchants. People cooked and often slept outside their homes (frequently on the roof) because of the heat.



Ancient Egyptian headrests were used as a pillow to support the head during sleep, made from materials like wood, stone, or ivory. They were not only functional for keeping hair and hairstyles neat and for allowing air to circulate, but they also held deep spiritual significance, believed to protect the sleeper from evil spirits and provide protection in the afterlife. The design, often featuring a curved support on a base, symbolized the rising sun and resurrection.