

**Q:** How faithful to their models are Roman marble copies of Greek bronze sculptures?

**A:** It is thought that many copies are very faithful to the originals and it is largely through these Roman copies that art historians have been able to reconstitute a history of Greek sculpture. Some small differences in the details of features or even poses have sometimes, however, been identified through research. As we have seen, marble is relatively brittle and does not have great tensile strength. Bronze has much greater tensile strength, and when ancient Greek sculptors started to exploit the potentials of this material, their sculpted figures took on a greater variety of poses than those in marble could. The extended arm of a bronze figure, for example, did not pose the same threat of disintegration as it would have had were it made of marble. This explains the supports that marble sculptures display. Often, a marble copy of a Greek bronze sculpture will show a figure supported by a marble tree stump for example. Of course, marble doesn't look like bronze and it interacts with light in different ways, which accounts for differences in how we perceive the marble copy compared to its bronze original. Marble absorbs light and, consequently, cast shadows are not as crisp as they are on a bronze sculpture. Marble sculptures, in this way, offer a "softer" appearance, and less clear and abrupt contrasts between light and dark zones. Additionally, marble statues were painted. Besides copies of Greek sculptures, the Romans also made free adaptations, or simply "Greek style" artworks.

Tags: [Greek Sculpture](#)

**Q:** Did Athens continue to be the artistic leader of ancient Greece in the fourth century BC?

**A:** After the Peloponnesian War, Athens lost its political and cultural supremacy, and other entities, such as Thebes, rivaled her. In the arts,

although the great sculptor Praxiteles came from Athens, the city lost its overarching dominance.

Tags: [Ancient Greece](#), [Athens](#)