

## Cypriote figurines

A figurine is a statuette (small statue) made out of terracotta, stone or bronze. Figurines can be in the shape of animals or humans. Most terracotta figurines would have been painted in bright colours. Paint was used for patterns, clothing, jewellery and even facial features (such as eyes or mouth). Some may have jewellery such as earrings or necklaces attached to them.

Like many figurines, our Cypriote figurines were probably found in sanctuaries or tombs. Some remind the gods (and us) of the people who dedicated them.

The figurines were put in both of these places as **votives** (gifts to the gods). The things they hold help us to understand their **context** (where and how they were used). These figurines' gifts (what they hold) were used for religious activities or as gifts for the dead people to take with them to the afterlife [[Myth and religion 18](#)]. Other figurines, found in houses and tombs, were dolls with moveable arms and legs [[Household 13](#)].

These Cypriote figurines are made from terracotta, using several techniques: moulds, the potters' wheel or by hand. Cypriotes learned how to use moulds from the Phoenicians in the 8th century bc. We can tell that three of the figurines were made by pressing clay into a mould because they have the same faces [[Citizenship 12](#)]. Five of the Ure figurines have mould-made faces, hand-made arms and wheel-made bodies [[Myth and Religion 18](#); [Warfare 12](#)]. Only three of our wheel-made figurines are well enough preserved to stand on their own; the wheel-made bodies are also the bases and helps figurines to stand [[Citizenship 12](#)].

### *Sadie Pickup*

Terracotta head from a statue of a worshipper, ca. 600 bc, from the Sanctuary of Apollo at Phrangissa, Tamassos, Cyprus, now in London (The British Museum).

