



## Sculptures in Ancient India

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# SCULPTURES IN ANCIENT INDIA

Indian sculpture, stemming from folk culture, initially crafted with clay on the potter's wheel, evolved into terracotta and various styles, depicting gods and decorating Buddhist, Jaina, and Hindu architecture

## About

- Small 3-D works of art
- Usually made of single type of material

## Harappan

- Extremely adept at handling 3-D volumes
- Common animal motifs - unicorn, humped bull, rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, buffalo, bison, goat, crocodile (No evidence of cow)
- **Bronze Figures:**
  - ❑ Made using "lost wax technique" or "Cire Perdue"
  - ❑ **Examples:** Bronze Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-daro, Bronze Bull of Kalibangan, etc.

## Mauryan

- Sculptures used primarily for decoration of stupas, in Torana and Medhi and as form of religious expression
  - ❑ **Example:** Yaksha and Yakshi
    - Objects of worship related to Jainism, Hinduism, and Buddhism
  - ❑ **Pottery:** Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW)
    - Characterised by black paint and highly lustrous finish, used as luxury items

## Gupta

- New school of sculpture developed around Sarnath
- Use of cream-coloured sandstone and metal, sculptures immaculately dressed and lacking any form of nakedness
  - ❑ **Example:** Copper sculpture of Sultanganj Buddha in Bihar

## Chola

- Chola temples emphasised decoration with sculptures, notably the Nataraja in Tandava posture

## Post Mauryan

- **Three prominent schools:**
  - ❑ **Gandhara:** Greek Influence, mainly Buddhist imagery, patronised by Kushana rulers, North West Frontier (Kandahar), used bluish-grey sandstone (later mud and stucco)
  - ❑ **Mathura:** Developed indigenously, used spotted red sandstone, Influence of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism; patronised by Kushana rulers, developed in and around Mathura, Sonkh, and Kankalitala
  - ❑ **Amaravati:** Developed indigenously, used white marble, mainly Buddhist influence, patronised by Satvahana rulers, developed in Krishna-Godavari lower valley, in and around Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda
- Art of sculpture reached its climax in Post-Mauryan period

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