[Template:Other uses](/wiki/Template:Other_uses" \o "Template:Other uses) [Template:Infobox deity](/wiki/Template:Infobox_deity) **Horus** is one of the most significant [deities](/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_deities) in [ancient Egyptian religion](/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_religion), who was worshipped from at least the late [Predynastic period](/wiki/Predynastic_Egypt) through to [Greco-Roman](/wiki/Greco-Roman) times. Different forms of Horus are recorded in history and these are treated as distinct gods by Egypt specialists.[[1]](#cite_note-1) These various forms may possibly be different perceptions of the same multi-layered deity in which certain attributes or [syncretic](/wiki/Syncretism) relationships are emphasized, not necessarily in opposition but complementary to one another, consistent with how the Ancient Egyptians viewed the multiple facets of reality.[[2]](#cite_note-2) He was most often depicted as a falcon, most likely a [lanner](/wiki/Lanner_falcon) or [peregrine](/wiki/Peregrine_falcon), or as a man with a falcon head.[[3]](#cite_note-3) The earliest recorded form of Horus is the [patron deity](/wiki/Patron_deity) of [Nekhen](/wiki/Nekhen) in [Upper Egypt](/wiki/Upper_Egypt), who is the first known national god, specifically related to the king who in time came to be regarded as a manifestation of Horus in life and [Osiris](/wiki/Osiris) in death.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The most commonly encountered family relationship describes Horus as the son of [Isis](/wiki/Isis) and Osiris, and he plays a key role in the [Osiris myth](/wiki/Osiris_myth) as Osiris's heir and the rival to [Set](/wiki/Set_(deity)), the murderer of Osiris. In another tradition [Hathor](/wiki/Hathor) is regarded as his mother and sometimes as his wife.[[1]](#cite_note-1) Horus served many functions in the [Egyptian pantheon](/wiki/Egyptian_pantheon), most notably being a god of the sky, war and hunting.

## Contents

* 1 Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]
* 2 Note of changes over time[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]
* 3 Horus and the pharaoh[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]
* 4 Origin mythology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
* 5 Mythological roles[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]
  + 5.1 Sky god[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
  + 5.2 God of war and hunting[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
  + 5.3 Conflict between Horus and Set[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
  + 5.4 Heru-pa-khered (Horus the Younger)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
  + 5.5 Her-ur (Horus the Elder)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
* 6 Celebrations of Horus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
* 7 Gallery of images[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
* 8 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
* 9 References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
* 10 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[Template:Hiero](/wiki/Template:Hiero) Horus is recorded in [Egyptian hieroglyphs](/wiki/Egyptian_hieroglyphs) as ḥr.w; the pronunciation has been reconstructed as \*Ḥāru, meaning "falcon". Additional meanings are thought to have been "the distant one" or "one who is above, over".[[4]](#cite_note-4) By [Coptic](/wiki/Coptic_language) times, the name became *Hōr*. It was adopted into [Greek](/wiki/Greek_language) as [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang) *Hōros*. The original name also survives in later Egyptian names such as [Har-si-ese](/wiki/Harsiese_(disambiguation)) literally "Horus, son of Isis". Some[Template:Who](/wiki/Template:Who) have proposed that Nekheny may have been another falcon-god, worshipped at [Nekhen](/wiki/Nekhen) (city of the falcon), with which Horus was identified from early on. Horus may be shown as a falcon on the [Narmer Palette](/wiki/Narmer_Palette) dating from about the 31st century BC.

## Note of changes over time[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

In early Egypt, Horus was the brother of [Isis](/wiki/Isis), [Osiris](/wiki/Osiris), [Set](/wiki/Set_(mythology)) and [Nephthys](/wiki/Nephthys). As different cults formed, he became the son of Isis and Osiris. Isis remained the sister of Osiris, Set and Nephthys.

## Horus and the pharaoh[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Pyramid texts](/wiki/Pyramid_texts) ca. 2400–2300 BC[[5]](#cite_note-5) describe the nature of the [Pharaoh](/wiki/Pharaoh) in different characters as both Horus and [Osiris](/wiki/Osiris). The Pharaoh as Horus in life became the Pharaoh as Osiris in death, where he was united with the rest of the gods. New incarnations of Horus succeeded the deceased pharaoh on earth in the form of new Pharaohs.

The lineage of Horus, the eventual product of unions between the children of [Atum](/wiki/Atum), may have been a means to explain and justify Pharaonic power. The gods produced by Atum were all representative of cosmic and terrestrial forces in Egyptian life. By identifying Horus as the offspring of these forces, then identifying him with Atum himself, and finally identifying the Pharaoh with Horus, the Pharaoh theologically had dominion over all the world.

The notion of Horus as the Pharaoh seems to have been superseded by the concept of the Pharaoh as the son of [Ra](/wiki/Ra) during the [Fifth Dynasty of Egypt](/wiki/Fifth_Dynasty_of_Egypt).[[6]](#cite_note-6)

## Origin mythology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Ancient Egyptian religion](/wiki/Template:Ancient_Egyptian_religion) Horus was born to the goddess [Isis](/wiki/Isis) after she retrieved all the dismembered body parts of her murdered husband [Osiris](/wiki/Osiris), except his penis which was thrown into the Nile and eaten by a catfish,[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) or sometimes by a crab, and according to [Plutarch's](/wiki/Plutarch) account (see [Osiris](/wiki/Osiris)) used her magic powers to resurrect Osiris and fashion a golden phallus[[9]](#cite_note-9) to conceive her son (older Egyptian accounts have the penis of Osiris surviving).

Once Isis knew she was pregnant with Horus, she fled to the [Nile Delta](/wiki/Nile_Delta) marshlands to hide from her brother [Set](/wiki/Set_(mythology)) who jealously killed Osiris and who she knew would want to kill their son.[[10]](#cite_note-10) There Isis bore a divine son, Horus.

## Mythological roles[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Hiero](/wiki/Template:Hiero)

### Sky god[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

Since Horus was said to be the sky, he was considered to also contain the sun and moon.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) It became said [Template:By whom](/wiki/Template:By_whom) that the sun was his right eye and the moon his left, and that they traversed the sky when he, a falcon, flew across it. Later, the reason that the moon was not as bright as the sun was explained by a tale, known as the [*The Contendings of Horus and Seth*](/wiki/The_Contendings_of_Horus_and_Seth). In this tale, it was said that [Set](/wiki/Set_(mythology)), the patron of Upper Egypt, and Horus, the patron of Lower Egypt, had battled for Egypt brutally, with neither side victorious, until eventually the gods sided with Horus.

As Horus was the ultimate victor he became known as **Harsiesis**, **Heru-ur** or **Har-Wer** (ḥr.w wr 'Horus the Great'), but more usually translated as **Horus the Elder**. In the struggle Set had lost a testicle, explaining why the desert, which Set represented, is infertile. Horus' left eye had also been gouged out, then a new eye was created by part of [Khonsu](/wiki/Khonsu), the moon god, and was replaced.

Horus represented the eclipsing binary Algol in the Calendar of Lucky and Unlucky Days of papyrus Cairo 86637.[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) Horus was occasionally shown in art as a naked boy with a finger in his mouth sitting on a [lotus](/wiki/Egyptian_lotus) with his mother. In the form of a youth, Horus was referred to as **Neferhor**. This is also spelled **Nefer Hor**, **Nephoros** or **Nopheros** (nfr ḥr.w) meaning 'The Good Horus'. [thumb|left|160px|Wedjat,](/wiki/File:Eye_of_Horus.svg) [Eye of Horus](/wiki/Eye_of_Horus) The [Eye of Horus](/wiki/Eye_of_Horus) is an ancient Egyptian symbol of protection and royal power from deities, in this case from Horus or [Ra](/wiki/Ra). The symbol is seen on images of Horus' mother, [Isis](/wiki/Isis), and on other deities associated with her.

In the Egyptian language, the word for this symbol was "Wedjat".[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) It was the eye of one of the earliest of Egyptian deities, [Wadjet](/wiki/Wadjet), who later became associated with [Bast](/wiki/Bastet_(mythology)), [Mut](/wiki/Mut), and [Hathor](/wiki/Hathor) as well. Wedjat was a solar deity and this symbol began as her eye, an all seeing eye. In early artwork, Hathor is also depicted with this eye.[[15]](#cite_note-15) Funerary amulets were often made in the shape of the Eye of Horus. The Wedjat or Eye of Horus is "the central element" of seven "[gold](/wiki/Gold), [faience](/wiki/Faience), [carnelian](/wiki/Carnelian) and [lapis lazuli](/wiki/Lapis_lazuli)" bracelets found on the mummy of [Shoshenq II](/wiki/Shoshenq_II).[[16]](#cite_note-16) The Wedjat "was intended to protect the king [here] in the afterlife"[[16]](#cite_note-16) and to ward off evil. Ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern sailors would frequently paint the symbol on the bow of their vessel to ensure safe sea travel.[[17]](#cite_note-17)

### God of war and hunting[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|left|160px|Horus depicted as a](/wiki/File:Horus_as_falcon.svg) [falcon](/wiki/Falcon) Horus was also said to be a god of war and hunting. The Horus falcon is shown upon a standard on the [predynastic](/wiki/Predynastic_Egypt) [Hunters Palette](/wiki/Hunters_Palette) in the "lion hunt".

Thus he became a symbol of majesty and power as well as the model of the pharaohs. The Pharaohs were said to be Horus in human form.

Furthermore, [Nemty](/wiki/Nemty), another war god, was later identified as Horus.[[18]](#cite_note-18)

### Conflict between Horus and Set[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|Horus,](/wiki/File:Egypte_louvre_091_aigle.jpg) [(Louvre Museum)](/wiki/Louvre), [Shen rings](/wiki/Shen_ring) in his grasp

Horus was told by his mother, Isis, to protect the people of Egypt from [Set](/wiki/Set_(mythology)), the god of the desert, who had killed his father [Osiris](/wiki/Osiris).[[19]](#cite_note-19)[[20]](#cite_note-20) Horus had many battles with Set, not only to avenge his father, but to choose the rightful ruler of Egypt. In these battles, Horus came to be associated with Lower Egypt, and became its patron.

According to [Papyrus Chester-Beatty I](/wiki/The_Contendings_of_Horus_and_Seth), Set is depicted as trying to prove his dominance by seducing Horus and then having [intercourse](/wiki/Sexual_intercourse) with him. However, Horus places his hand between his thighs and catches Set's [semen](/wiki/Semen), then subsequently throws it in the river, so that he may not be said to have been inseminated by Set. Horus then deliberately spreads his own semen on some [lettuce](/wiki/Lettuce), which was Set's favorite food. After Set had eaten the lettuce, they went to the gods to try to settle the argument over the rule of Egypt. The gods first listened to Set's claim of dominance over Horus, and call his semen forth, but it answered from the river, invalidating his claim. Then, the gods listened to Horus' claim of having dominated Set, and call his semen forth, and it answered from inside Set.[[21]](#cite_note-21)[[22]](#cite_note-22) [left|150px|thumb|*Figure of a Horus Falcon*, between circa 300 and circa 250 BC (Greco-Roman).](/wiki/File:Egyptian_-_Figure_of_a_Horus_Falcon_-_Walters_571484_-_Right.jpg)[[23]](#cite_note-23) The Walters Art Museum. [left|150px|thumb|Horus Falcon, after 600 BCE. Original in the Department of Egyptian Antiquities British Museum](/wiki/File:Replica_Horus_Falcon_British_Museum.JPG) However, Set still refused to relent, and the other gods were getting tired from over eighty years of fighting and challenges. Horus and Set challenged each other to a boat race, where they each raced in a boat made of stone. Horus and Set agreed, and the race started. But Horus had an edge: his boat was made of wood painted to resemble stone, rather than true stone. Set's boat, being made of heavy stone, sank, but Horus's did not. Horus then won the race, and Set stepped down and officially gave Horus the throne of Egypt.[[24]](#cite_note-24) But after the New Kingdom, Set still was considered Lord of the desert and its oases.[[25]](#cite_note-25) In many versions of the story, Horus and Set divide the realm between them. This division can be equated with any of several fundamental dualities that the Egyptians saw in their world. Horus may receive the fertile lands around the Nile, the core of Egyptian civilization, in which case Set takes the barren desert or the foreign lands that are associated with it; Horus may rule the earth while Set dwells in the sky; and each god may take one of the two traditional halves of the country, [Upper](/wiki/Upper_Egypt) and [Lower Egypt](/wiki/Lower_Egypt), in which case either god may be connected with either region. Yet in the [Memphite Theology](/wiki/Memphite_Theology), Geb, as judge, first apportions the realm between the claimants and then reverses himself, awarding sole control to Horus. In this peaceable union, Horus and Set are reconciled, and the dualities that they represent have been resolved into a united whole. Through this resolution, order is restored after the tumultuous conflict.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Egyptologists have often tried to connect the conflict between the two gods with political events early in Egypt's [history](/wiki/History_of_ancient_Egypt) or [prehistory](/wiki/Prehistoric_Egypt). The cases in which the combatants divide the kingdom, and the frequent association of the paired Horus and Set with the union of Upper and Lower Egypt, suggest that the two deities represent some kind of division within the country. Egyptian tradition and archaeological evidence indicate that Egypt was united at the beginning of its history when an Upper Egyptian kingdom, in the south, conquered Lower Egypt in the north. The Upper Egyptian rulers called themselves "followers of Horus", and Horus became the patron god of the unified nation and its kings. Yet Horus and Set cannot be easily equated with the two halves of the country. Both deities had several cult centers in each region, and Horus is often associated with Lower Egypt and Set with Upper Egypt. Other events may have also affected the myth. Before even Upper Egypt had a single ruler, two of its major cities were [Nekhen](/wiki/Nekhen), in the far south, and [Naqada](/wiki/Naqada), many miles to the north. The rulers of Nekhen, where Horus was the patron deity, are generally believed to have unified Upper Egypt, including Naqada, under their sway. Set was associated with Naqada, so it is possible that the divine conflict dimly reflects an enmity between the cities in the distant past. Much later, at the end of the [Second Dynasty](/wiki/Second_Dynasty_of_Egypt) (c. 2890–2686 BCE), King [Peribsen](/wiki/Peribsen) used the [Set animal](/wiki/Set_animal) in writing his [*serekh*](/wiki/Serekh)-name, in place of the traditional falcon [hieroglyph](/wiki/Hieroglyph) representing Horus. His successor [Khasekhemwy](/wiki/Khasekhemwy) used both Horus and Set in the writing of his *serekh*. This evidence has prompted conjecture that the Second Dynasty saw a clash between the followers of the Horus-king and the worshippers of Set led by Peribsen. Khasekhemwy's use of the two animal symbols would then represent the reconciliation of the two factions, as does the resolution of the myth.[[27]](#cite_note-27)

### Heru-pa-khered (Horus the Younger)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

Horus the Younger, [Harpocrates](/wiki/Harpocrates) to the Ptolemaic Greeks, is represented in the form of a youth wearing a lock of hair (a sign of youth) on the right of his head while sucking his finger. In addition, he usually wears the united crowns of Egypt, the crown of Upper Egypt and the crown of Lower Egypt. He is a form of the rising sun, representing its earliest light.

### Her-ur (Horus the Elder)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

In this form he represented the god of light and the husband of [Hathor](/wiki/Hathor). He was one of the oldest gods of ancient Egypt. He became the patron of Nekhen (Hierakonpolis) and the first national god (God of the Kingdom). Later, he also became the patron of the pharaohs, and was called the son of truth.[[28]](#cite_note-28) – signifying his role as an important upholder of [Maat](/wiki/Maat). He was seen as a great falcon with outstretched wings whose right eye was the sun and the left one was the moon. In this form, he was sometimes given the title **Kemwer**, meaning *(the) great black (one)*.

The Greek form of **Her-ur** (or **Har wer**) is **Haroeris**. Other variants include **Hor Merti** 'Horus of the two eyes' and **Horkhenti Irti**.[[29]](#cite_note-29)

## Celebrations of Horus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius](/wiki/Ambrosius_Theodosius_Macrobius) in the [Chronicon](/wiki/Chronicon), noted the annual [Egyptian](/wiki/Ancient_Egypt) celebration of Horus, specifying the time as the [winter solstice](/wiki/Winter_solstice):

An analysis of the works of [Epiphanius](/wiki/Epiphanius) note the Egyptian [winter-solstice celebration](/wiki/Winter_solstice_celebration) of Horus in [Panarion](/wiki/Panarion).[[30]](#cite_note-30)

## Gallery of images[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

<gallery widths="160px" heights="160px" perrow="5"> File:HORUS GOLDENHEAD.jpg|Horus, patron deity of Hierakonpolis (near [Edfu](/wiki/Edfu)), the predynastic capital of Upper Egypt. Its head was executed by means of beating the gold then connecting it with the copper body. A uraeus is fixed to the diadem which supports two tall openwork feathers. The eyes are inlaid with obsidian. (6th dynasty). File:S F-E-CAMERON Hatshepsut Hawk - 83d40m - Wadjet -2pstcrpt.JPG|Horus represented in relief with [Wadjet](/wiki/Wadjet) and wearing the double crown – [*Temple of Hatshepsut*](/wiki/Temple_of_Hatshepsut) Image:Temple of Edfu 05.jpg|Horus relief in the [Temple of Edfu](/wiki/Temple_of_Edfu) File:Horus\_R01.jpg|Statue of Horus from the reign of [Amenhotep II](/wiki/Amenhotep_II) (18th Dynasty, ca. 1400 BCE) in the [Template:Ill](/wiki/Template:Ill), [Belgium](/wiki/Belgium) </gallery>

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

* [Egyptian pantheon](/wiki/Egyptian_pantheon)
* [Hawk of Quraish](/wiki/Hawk_of_Quraish)
* [Osiris myth](/wiki/Osiris_myth)
* [Solar deity](/wiki/Solar_deity#Ancient_Egypt)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Commons category](/wiki/Template:Commons_category)

* [UCAR educational article about Horus](http://www.windows.ucar.edu/tour/link=/mythology/horus_sun.html&edu=high)
* [Britannica Online: Horus (Egyptian God)](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/272528/Horus)

[Template:Ancient Egyptian religion footer](/wiki/Template:Ancient_Egyptian_religion_footer)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Egyptian gods](/wiki/Category:Egyptian_gods) [Category:Solar gods](/wiki/Category:Solar_gods) [Category:Sky and weather gods](/wiki/Category:Sky_and_weather_gods) [Category:Savior gods](/wiki/Category:Savior_gods) [Category:War gods](/wiki/Category:War_gods) [Category:Hellenistic Egyptian deities](/wiki/Category:Hellenistic_Egyptian_deities) [Category:Mythological birds of prey](/wiki/Category:Mythological_birds_of_prey)