**Athena**

**The Varvakeion Athena statue**

<https://hades.fandom.com/wiki/Athena>

<https://www.namuseum.gr/en/collection/klasiki-periodos-2/>

**Historical Information**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

This statue is a Roman-period marble copy of the famous Athena Parthenos, now in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

The Varvakeion Athena dates from around AD 200–250. It is believed to be one of the most faithful surviving replicas of the chryselephantine (gold and ivory) statue of Athena Parthenos originally by Phidias in the Parthenon.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

A Roman marble copy (3rd c. CE) faithfully reflecting Phidias’s lost chryselephantine Athena Parthenos.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

The Varvakeion Athena, carved circa AD 200–250, is a marble Roman copy of the lost original Athena Parthenos by Phidias. It preserves key iconographic elements—helmet, aegis, serpent, shield, and Nike—thus serving as one of our best windows into how the colossal chryselephantine original may have looked.

**Game Narrative**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

In Hades, Athena appears as a goddess who helps by giving boons that let you deflect attacks.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

Athena in Hades gives boons centred on enhancing deflection and defensive abilities. She shows up in rooms (especially on Mount Olympus) to aid the player by granting her powers.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

In Hades, Athena’s gifts enable the player to reflect projectiles and bolster survivability.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Within Hades (and Hades II), Athena’s boons emphasize Deflect mechanics—allowing melee or ranged attacks to bounce back at foes—and she also restores Death Defiance charges. She may also appear in special rooms on Mount Olympus to interveningly clear enemies or offer boons.

**Charon**

**Charon fresco in The Last Judgement (Michelangelo)**

<https://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/cappella-sistina/giudizio-universale.html>

<https://hades-archive.fandom.com/wiki/Charon>

**Historical Information**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

In Michelangelo’s Last Judgment (Sistine Chapel), Charon is shown ferrying souls across to Hell, wielding an oar.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

The fresco The Last Judgment (1536–1541) features Charon in the lower right, depicted as a stern boatman pushing souls to the underworld with his oar, adapted from Christian and classical imagery.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Michelangelo’s Charon is a dramatic visual of the soul’s judgment, drawing from Dante and classical myth.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

In the monumental fresco The Last Judgment (1536–1541) in the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo integrates the classical figure of Charon—long the ferryman of souls—with Christian eschatological themes. Charon is placed in the lower right corner, thrusting his oar and driving the damned toward Hell, echoing Dante’s imagery and medieval traditions.

**Game Narrative**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

In Hades, Charon is the boatman who carries souls and runs a shop where you spend coins.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

Charon in Hades is a stern figure who ferries souls across the Styx and also operates a shop in the underworld, selling items and boons in exchange for Obols.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

In Hades, Charon is a dual figure: ferryman and merchant, controlling access and commerce in the Underworld.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Charon in Hades is more than a mythical ferryman—he is a broker of the Underworld. He demands the coin (Obol) for passage, and also runs a shop where he peddles boons and artifacts to the player. Over time, his relationship and “affinity” deepen, and he may respond to appeals—though he remains taciturn and shrouded in mystery.

**Achilles**

**The Dying Achilles statue**

<https://achilleion-palace.gr/dying-achilles-statue-in-achilleion-palace/>

<https://hades.fandom.com/wiki/Achilles>

**Historical Information**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

The Dying Achilles is a marble sculpture that shows Achilles wounded and dying, located in the gardens of the Achilleion Palace in Corfu.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

The **Dying Achilles**, sculpted by Ernst Herter in the late 19th century, portrays Achilles in his final moments: his body slumped, clutching the arrow in his heel. It is displayed at the Achilleion Palace, Corfu.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Herter’s Dying Achilles is a neoclassical marble sculpture showing Achilles’ fatal wound in his heel and his human frailty.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

The Dying Achilles (Ernst Herter, late 19th century) captures the moment of Achilles’ mortal demise: his body collapsing, his hand clinging to the arrow in his unguarded heel, and his expression suffused with pathos. This work blends neoclassical idealization with palpable vulnerability, and is located in the Achilleion Palace gardens on Corfu.

**Game Narrative**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

In Hades, Achilles is a hero who trains the player and gives advice.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

In Hades, Achilles is a demi-god mentor figure who offers guidance and moral support to Zagreus, though he does not boast of his heroic past.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

In Hades, Achilles acts as a teacher and companion to Zagreus, imparting calm counsel and occasional boons.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Within the Hades narrative, Achilles manifests as both legendary demi-god and quietly humble mentor. He refrains from grandiose tales, instead offering steady moral support, subtle guidance, and occasionally boons to Zagreus as he battles through the Underworld. Achilles’ presence bridges heroism and vulnerability, reinforcing the game’s theme of heroic struggle rather than triumph.

**Stygian Blade**

**Iron Sword**

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1892-0901-452?selectedImageId=1319903001>

<https://hades.fandom.com/wiki/Stygian_Blade>

**Historical Information**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

This is a fragmentary iron sword in the British Museum, about 557 mm including handle parts, showing corrosion and damage.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

The British Museum’s specimen (H\_1892-0901-452) is an iron sword fragment, 557 mm including the hilt’s metal fittings. The blade is flat in section and notably corroded; its shape suggests mixing Roman and Celtic influence.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

A fragmentary Roman-period iron sword (c. 5th–1st cent. BCE / early CE), combining Roman blade form with possible Celtic fittings.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

This iron sword fragment (catalogue H\_1892-0901-452) held at the British Museum exhibits both Roman typology (broad, flat blade) and potential Celtic metal-fitting adaptation. It measures 557 mm in total length including hilt parts; the blade is 435 mm long, 52 mm wide, and shows undergone bending and breakage.

**Game Narrative**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

The Stygian Blade is Zagreus’s first weapon, found deep in the Underworld.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

In Hades, the Stygian Blade is the basic infernal weapon that Zagreus wields to fight through the Underworld; it can be upgraded or modified to increase power and versatility.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

The Stygian Blade in Hades is the foundational melee weapon, serving as a modular platform for upgrades and aspects.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

As the canonical Infernal Arm of Zagreus, the Stygian Blade is both narrative and mechanical anchor in Hades. It begins as a straightforward sword, but the player can enhance it with Daedalus Hammer upgrades, select Aspects, and combine Boons to change its behavior—ensuring that even a simple blade evolves into a layered, symbolic instrument of fate and resistance.

**Shield of Chaos**

**Shield of King Pharnakes**

<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103TTD>

<https://hades.fandom.com/wiki/Shield_of_Chaos>

**Historical Information**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

This is a bronze shield from the 2nd century BC, once belonging to King Pharnakes of Pontus, now at the Getty Museum.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

The Shield of King Pharnakes dates from about 185–160 BC. The bronze shield carries an inscription naming Pharnakes and features a six-ray star motif at its center. It is held by the J. Paul Getty Museum.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

A Hellenistic bronze shield inscribed for King Pharnakes of Pontus (~2nd c. BC), decorated with star motif.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

The Shield of King Pharnakes (c. 185–160 BC), preserved at the Getty Museum, is a large bronze ceremonial or combat shield inscribed with the king’s name in a band around its rim. Its central embellishment is a six-ray star motif; stylistically, the star motif possibly draws from Iranian solar symbolism and Macedonian royal iconography.

**Game Narrative**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

The Shield of Chaos is a mythical shield in Hades that grants powerful defensive abilities. (Fictional/game object)

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

In Hades, the Shield of Chaos is an infernal shield imbued with chaotic forces: it augments the bearer’s defenses, often granting special interactions or effects tied to chaos and disruption.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

In Hades, the Shield of Chaos embodies a weaponized paradox: it defends by channeling chaos, turning disruption into protection.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Within Hades lore, the Shield of Chaos is more than mere armor—it is a living paradox that channels the primordial turbulence of the Underworld. It embodies the duality of chaos as both destructive and protective. When wielded, it may destabilize enemies or transform attacks, reinforcing thematic motifs of order vs. chaos and the unpredictability of fate.

**Obol Coin**

**Charon’s Obol**

<https://www.cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=103284>

<https://hades.fandom.com/wiki/Charon%27s_Obol>

**Historical Information**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

Charon’s obol is a coin placed with the dead to pay the ferryman Charon for passage to the afterlife.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

From ancient Greek and later Roman funerary practices, a coin (or gold leaf pseudo-coin) was placed in or near the mouth of the deceased—called Charon’s obol—as symbolic payment to Charon for passage across the rivers into the Underworld.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Charon’s obol is an ancient funerary ritual object, often a coin, inserted in burials to facilitate the soul’s journey across the underworld river.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

The practice of Charon’s obol spans Greek and Roman funerary customs: one or more coins (or metal leaf “ghost coins” / lamellae) were placed with the deceased—commonly in the mouth—so that the soul could pay Charon, the mythic ferryman, for passage into the afterlife. Literary and archaeological evidence (from 5th century BC through Roman periods) attest to this custom.

**Game Narrative**

**1. Language: Easy / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Introductory, Tone for young audience/generic adults)*

In Hades, Obols are the coins you collect to buy items from Charon’s shop.

**2. Language: Easy / Content: Complex**

*(Mid-size, Average, Tone for generic adults)*

Charon’s Obol (in Hades) is a core currency artifact: players earn obols by clearing rooms or defeating enemies and use them to purchase Boons, items, or upgrades from Charon’s shop or Wells of Charon.

**3. Language: Complex / Content: Simple**

*(Very brief, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

In Hades, Charon’s Obol is the Underworld’s coin system; it functions as a spendable resource in Charon’s shop or Wells.

**4. Language: Complex / Content: Complex**

*(Long, Advanced, Tone for scholars)*

Mechanically in Hades, Charon’s Obol is an artifact currency that persists through a run and is spent at Charon’s shop or Wells of Charon. Strategically, managing obol resources is core to deciding between upgrades, Boons, and survival options. Some runs force you to make hard choices: spend now or conserve for critical purchases later.