

## GUIDE TO ROMAN VESSEL FORMS

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### **Amphora**

A vase with two handles and a long neck that is narrower than the body. The Latin word *amphora* is derived from the Greek *amphoreus*, a word combining *amphi-* (“on both sides”) and *phoreus* (“carrier”). Amphoras were the principle means for transporting and storing olive oil, wine, grapes, fish, grain, and other commodities.

*Amphora, 3rd century A.D. Discovered in Adrumetum (present-day Sousse, Tunisia). Clay. Musée du Louvre; Goetschy gift, 1927 (inv. ca 2809)*



### **Patera**

A broad, shallow dish used for drinking or as a basin for hand rinsing before and during meals. In ritual contexts, pateras were used for pouring offerings of liquids, perfumes, or foods onto the flame of the altar.

*Patera, 1st century A.D. Provenance unknown. Bronze. Musée du Louvre; Purchased in 1825, formerly in the Durand collection (br 3031–inv. ed 2814)*



### **Situla**

A bronze or ceramic bucket that was most likely used for drawing water from a well. Situlas were made with movable ring-shaped handles that allowed them to be hung by a rope in a well.

*Situla, early 1st century A.D. Discovered in Caporalino (Haute-Corse, France). Bronze. Musée du Louvre; Purchased in 1874 (br 2828–inv. mnb 655)*



### **Pyxis**

The word *pyxis* (plural, *pyxides*) comes from the Greek language and originally referred to the small wooden boxes used by doctors to hold ointments. Archeologists use the term to refer to all small boxes—whether of terracotta, metal, ivory, bone, or other material. Pyxides were commonly used by women as containers for cosmetics, jewelry, and articles for their toilette.

*Pyxis with Lid, 1st half of 1st century A.D. Discovered in Aintab, near Aleppo (Syria). Glazed clay with molded decoration. Musée du Louvre; purchased 1931 (inv. ca 2026)*



### **Krater**

A wide-mouthed vessel with two handles mounted on the middle of its body. The word *krater* comes from the Greek verb *kerannumi*, meaning “I mix.” *Kraters* were used to mix wine and water—a ritual that was customary in ancient Rome.

*Krater, ca. 10 B.C.–10 A.D. Provenance unknown. Clay. Musée du Louvre; Pennelli purchase, 1869 (H 436-inv. n111 3445)*



### **Mortar**

A bowl or receptacle used for grinding various spices and ingredients. Mortars were widespread in the Greek world and were produced in large quantities in Italy during the first century A.D.

*Mortar, 4th–5th century A.D. Discovered in Ammaedera (present-day Haïdra, Tunisia). Clay. Musée du Louvre; Goetschy gift, 1927 (inv. ca 2826)*



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