

## 📖 Topic Page: [Centaurs](#)

Definition: **Centaur** from *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*

In Greek mythology a creature with the head, arms and torso of a man and the lower body and legs of a horse. Centaurs are said to have dwelt in ancient Thessaly, so that the origin of the myth is probably to be found in the expert horsemanship of this region's inhabitants. The Thessalian centaurs were invited to a marriage feast, and one of their number attempted to abduct the bride, whereupon conflict ensued and the centaurs were driven out of the country by the LAPITHS. The origin of the word is unknown. See *also* GANDHARVA; IXION.



Image from: [Detail of "The Fight between the Lapiths and the... in Pocket Guides: Narrative](#)

Summary Article: **centaur**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

In Greek mythology, a creature half human and half horse, wild and lawless. Chiron, the mentor of the hero Heracles and tutor of the god of medicine Asclepius, was an exception. Their home was said to be on Mount Pelion, Thessaly.

**Birth** Tradition described them as either the direct offspring of King Ixion of Thessaly and Nephele, a cloud phantom he believed to be the goddess Hera, or their grandchildren, the progeny of their son Centaurus and the mares on

Pelion.

**Myth** Tales of their licentious behaviour included the battle at the wedding of Pirithous, king of the Lapiths, when the centaurs attempted to steal the bride, along with other female guests; and a version of the death of the hero Heracles, when the centaur Nessus, killed while abducting the hero's wife, Deianara, promised her that his poisoned blood would restore Heracles' love if he strayed.

**Art** The earliest representations of centaurs (about 1800–1000 BC) are two-headed, and were excavated near Famagusta, Cyprus, in 1962. Some female representations also exist.

**APA**

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Centaur. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/centaurs>

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## APA

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

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