Vocabulary List for Greek Vases

The following is a list of the different types of vases and vessels that are on view in the Poseidon and the Sea exhibition, along with descriptions of their shapes and functions.

**Alabastron:** A small, elongated perfume vase.

**Amphora:** A tall, two-handed storage jar that held oil, wine, milk, or grain. Amphoras were sometimes used as grave markers or as containers for funeral offerings or human remains. It is also one of the most common types of pots and, filled with olive oil, was awarded as a prize to the winners of events at the Panathenaic games.

**Aryballos:** A small, rounded perfume vase.

**Askos:** A small, spouted vase, probably for oil.

**Chous:** Type of oinochoe characterized by a plump shape with a smooth profile and a trefoil mouth.

**Dinos (pl. dinoi):** A large, round-bottomed bowl with no handles, used for mixing wine with water. Usually placed on a ceramic stand or metal tripod.

**Hydria:** A Greek or Etruscan vessel for carrying water. Made of bronze or clay, a hydria has three handles: two for carrying and one for pouring.

**Kantharos (pl. kantharoi):** A cup with two large vertical handles and a stemmed foot.

**Krater:** A vase used for mixing wine and water.

**Kylix:** A stemmed drinking cup.
**Lebes Gamikos** (pl. lebetes gamikoi): A large vase with two upright handles, often with a conical stand and lid. This vase was used during marriage and burial ceremonies.

**Lekythos**: A large, cylindrical vase used for holding olive oil, a precious substance for ancient Greeks. This type of vase was also used in funerary rituals. The vessels were left on graves or buried with the deceased.

**Oinochoe**: A wine jug with a spout and a single handle.

**Pelike**: An amphora with its largest diameter falling below its midpoint.

**Phiale (pl. phialai)**: A shallow bowl used for wine and pouring libations in religious ceremonies. Often with an upraised knob in the center, called an *omphalos* (navel), which gives the vessel its name.

**Psykters**: A fairly unusual shape with a full, bulbous body above a tall, narrow foot. Used to hold wine and floated in kraters filled with cold water to keep the wine cool.

**Skyphos**: Deep drinking cup with two handles, both usually horizontal.

**Stamnos**: A mixing/storage vessel with a short neck and two horizontal handles.