

aether

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See also: **Aether**

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English

Pronunciation

- (UK) IPA^(key): /'iːθə/
- (US) IPA^(key): /'iːθɚ/

Noun

aether (*countable and uncountable, plural aethers*)

1. *Alternative spelling of ether.*

Quotations

- For usage examples of this term, see the citations page.

Anagrams

- hearte, heater, hereat, reheat

Latin

Etymology

From Ancient Greek αἰθήρ (*aithḗr*, “air; ether”).

Pronunciation

- (*Classical*) IPA^(key): /ˈaj.tʰeːr/

Noun

aethēr *m* (*genitive aetheris*); *third declension*

1. the upper, pure, bright air; ether; the heavens
2. the air or sky; light of day
3. the upper world, the earth (as opposed to the lower world)
4. the brightness or ethereal matter surrounding a deity

Inflection

Note that, in Late Latin, the plural is sometimes written as aethera.

Third declension, Greek type, nominative singular in *-ēr*.

<i>Number</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>nominative</i>	aethēr	aetherēs
<i>genitive</i>	aetheris	aetherum
<i>dative</i>	aetherī	aetheribus
<i>accusative</i>	aethera aetherem	aetherēs
<i>ablative</i>	aethere	aetheribus
<i>vocative</i>	aethēr	aetherēs

Related terms

- aetherius
- aethra

Descendants

- English: ether
- French: éther
- German: Äther

- Italian: etere
- Portuguese: éter

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Categories: English lemmas | English nouns | English uncountable nouns | English countable nouns
| Latin terms derived from Ancient Greek | Latin lemmas | Latin nouns | Latin third declension nouns

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Aether (mythology)

In Greek mythology, **Aether** or **Aithēr** (*Æthere*, Ancient Greek: Αἰθήρ, pronounced [aitʰɛːr]) is one of the primordial deities. Aether is the personification of the upper air.^[1] He embodies the pure upper air that the gods breathe, as opposed to the normal air (αἴρ, *aer*) breathed by mortals. Like Tartarus and Erebus, Aether may have had shrines in ancient Greece, but he had no temples and it is unlikely that he had a cult.

1 Mythology

1.1 Hesiod

In Hesiod's *Theogony*, Aether (Brightness), was the son of Erebus (Darkness) and Nyx (Night), and the brother of Hemera (Day).^[2]

1.2 Hyginus

The Roman mythographer Hyginus, says Aether was the son of Chaos and Caligo (Darkness).^[3] According to Jan Bremmer,^[4]

Hyginus ... started his *Fabulae* with a strange hodgepodge of Greek and Roman cosmogonies and early genealogies. It begins as follows: *Ex Caligine Chaos. Ex Chao et Caligine Nox Dies Erebus Aether* (Praefatio 1). His genealogy looks like a derivation from Hesiod, but it starts with the un-Hesiodic and un-Roman *Caligo*, 'Darkness'. Darkness probably did occur in a cosmogonic poem of Alcman, but it seems only fair to say that it was not prominent in Greek cosmogonies.

Hyginus says further that the children of Aether and Day were Earth, Heaven, and Sea, while the children of Aether and Earth were "Grief, Deceit, Wrath, Lamentation, Falsehood, Oath, Vengeance, Intemperance, Altercation, Forgetfulness, Sloth, Fear, Pride, Incest, Combat, Ocean, Themis, Tartarus, Pontus; and the Titans, Briareus, Gyges, Steropes, Atlas, Hyperion, and Polus, Saturn, Ops, Moneta, Dione; and three Furies – namely, Alecto, Megaera, Tisiphone."^[3]



Jacob Bryant's *Orphic Egg* (1774)

1.3 Orphic Hymns

Aristophanes states that Aether was the son of Erebus. However, Damascius says that Aether, Erebus and Chaos were siblings, and the offspring of Chronos (Father Time). According to Epiphanius, the world began as a cosmic egg, encircled by Time and Inevitability (most likely Chronos and Ananke) in serpent fashion. Together they constricted the egg, squeezing its matter with great force, until the world divided into two hemispheres. After that, the atoms sorted themselves out. The lighter and finer ones floated above and became the Bright Air (Aether and/or Uranus) and the rarefied Wind (Chaos), while the heavier and dirtier atoms sank and became the Earth (Gaia) and the Ocean (Pontos and/or Oceanus). See also Plato's *Myth of Er*.

The fifth Orphic hymn to Aether describes the substance as "the high-reigning, ever indestructible power of Zeus," "the best element," and "the life-spark of all creatures."^[5] Though attributed to the mythological poet Orpheus who lived before the time of Homer, the likely composition of the hymns in the 6th-4th centuries BCE make them contemporary with natural philosophers, such as Empedocles, who theorized the material forces of nature as identical with the gods and superior to the anthropo-

morphic divinities of Homeric religion.

- Smith, William; *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, London (1873). “Aether”

2 See also

- Atlas (mythology)
- Caelus
- Lyssa
- Namkha
- Quintessence
- Sky deity

3 Notes

- [1] Grimal p. 22; *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, “Aither”, p. 33.
- [2] Hesiod, *Theogony* 124–125; Gantz, p. 4.
- [3] Hyginus, *Fabulae* Preface.
- [4] Bremmer, p. 5.
- [5] <http://www.hellenicgods.org/orphic-hymns---orphikoi-hymnoi>

4 References

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5 External links

- The Theoi Project, “AITHER”

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Aether

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See also: **aether**

English

Etymology

From Ancient Greek Αἰθήρ (*Aithḗr*, “Upper Air”).

Proper noun

Aether

- (Greek mythology)* One of the Greek primordial deities, who was the personification of the upper air of the gods. His parents of Erebus and Nyx, and his sister-wife is Hemera/Dies.

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| en:Greek mythology | en:Gods | en:Greek deities

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