

Odysseus, King of Ithaca

Objective To win fame and renown, to have my name spoken for millennia, to be a hero for the ages.

Experience 1270 BCE-1200BCE Kingdom of Ithaca Ithaca, Greece

King of Ithaca¹

- Supreme ruler of the island of Ithaca.
- Arbiter of judgments and maker of laws.²
- Commander of armies.³

1260-1250 BCE⁴ Trojan War Troy

Warrior and General

- Orchestrated fall of Troy through device of the Trojan Horse.⁵
- Fought alongside and commanded Ithacan army for ten years.
- Captured Priam's son Helenus the prophet, thereby learning the Achaeans must capture the Palladium to take Troy.⁶

1250-1240 BCE *The Odyssey* All Over the Known World

Adventurer

- Successfully defeated Polyphemus, the Cyclops, through cunning and trickery.⁷
- Vanquished Circe through cunning and trickery.⁸
- Successfully entered Hades becoming the only mortal man to do so.⁹
- Successfully passed the Sirens, a feat accomplished only by one other crew—Jason and the Argonauts.¹⁰
- Braved Scylla, passing by with minimal losses.¹¹
- Withstood the wiles of Calypso.¹²
- Slaughtered over 100 suitors attempting to wed my wife and take my kingdom.¹³

Education 1290-1270 Tutors, Palace of Ithaca Ithaca, Greece

- Tutored in arts of war and command, as well as governance, by father Laertes.
- Taught arts of cunning and war by Athena.

Interests Fame, renown, slaughtering monsters, solving predicaments through cunning¹⁴, going where no man has gone before, seducing goddesses and raising sheep.¹⁵

Notes:

1. *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* both establish this as accepted fact before the tales take place.
2. *The Odyssey*, Book II, Lines 26-27, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "We have never once held assembly or sat/In council since Odysseus left."
3. Odysseus is established as commander in *The Iliad*.
4. Herodotus states that Troy fell in 1250 BCE, but there is wild debate, and several dates over the course of the 12th and 13th centuries BCE are given by other historians and authors. I chose the one I was most familiar with.
5. *The Odyssey*, Book IV, Lines 290-292, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "Listen to what he did in the wooden horse,/Where all we Argive chiefs sat waiting/To bring slaughter and death to the Trojans."
6. Fragment from *The Little Iliad*.
7. *The Odyssey*, Book IX, Lines 513-514, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "Now this puny, little, good-for-nothing runt/Has put my eye out."
8. *The Odyssey*, Book X, Lines 359-361, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "No other man/Has ever resisted this drug once it's past his lips./But you have a mind that cannot be beguiled."
9. *The Odyssey*, Book X, Line 525, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "No man has ever sailed his black ship to Hades."
10. *The Odyssey*, Book XII, Lines 206-207, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "When we had rowed past, and the Sirens' song/Had faded on the waves"
11. *The Odyssey*, Book XII, Lines 263-265, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "And Scylla devoured them at her door, as they shrieked/And stretched their hands down to me/In their awful struggle."
12. *The Odyssey*, Book VII, Lines 274-277, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "She took me in,/Gave me food, and said she would make me/Immortal and ageless for all of my days./But she never touched my heart."
13. *The Odyssey*, Book XXII, Lines 436-441, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "These men/Have been destroyed by divine destiny/And their own recklessness. They honored no one,/Rich or poor, high or low, who came to them./And so by their folly they have brought upon themselves/An ugly fate."
14. *The Iliad*, Book II, Line 199, trans. Ian Johnson: "Odysseus, a man as wise as Zeus."
15. *The Odyssey*, Book IX, Lines 422-432, trans. Stanley Lombardo: "My best idea/Had to do with the sheep that were there, big,/Thick-fleeced beauties with wool as dark as violets./Working silently, I bound them together/With willow branches the Cyclops slept on./I bound them in threes./Each middle sheep/Carried a man underneath, portected by/The two on either side: three sheep to a man./As for me, there was a ram, the best in the flock./I grabbed his back and curled up beneath/His shaggy belly."