

## WORKING OUT

Many Romans began their visit to the baths by working up a sweat in the exercise yard - or *palaestra*. Men enjoyed weight-lifting, wrestling, fencing and ball games, while women played a game called *trochus*, which involved rolling a metal hoop with a hooked stick.

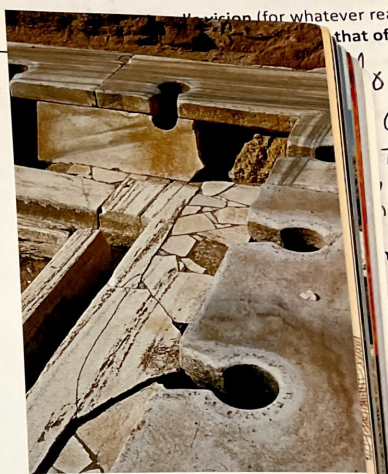
## GETTING CLEAN

The Romans didn't have soap, so instead they smeared their bodies with perfumed oil. The oil was then scraped off, along with the dirt, using a curved stick called a *strigil*. Scraping yourself wasn't easy, so wealthy Romans usually brought a slave to do the scraping for them.

This is a metal *strigil* - the long, curved end was scraped over the skin.

## THE HOTTEST SPOT IN TOWN

The baths were heated by a central heating system, or *hypocaust*. Hot air, warmed by a furnace in the basement, ran under the floors and inside the walls. Some of the floors were so hot that people had to wear wooden-soled sandals to stop their feet from getting burned, while the slaves who stoked the furnaces often fainted from the heat.



Bath-houses often had a public toilet, like this, where people sat together and chatted.

## "...AND RELAX!"

Roman men often stayed at the baths until closing time. After their bath, they could buy a snack at one of the food stalls, then stroll in the gardens, read quietly in the library, or listen to a concert or poetry recital. Some sat in the shade playing board games, such as chess or backgammon, or gambling with dice.

The *tepidarium* had a lukewarm - or *tepid* - pool, where bathers could gradually cool down.



The bath ended with a refreshing dip in the *frigidarium* - an unheated, open-air swimming pool.



A selection of games counters and dice