

Mummification in Ancient Egypt

The ancient Egyptians believed in life after death. They also believed that it was important to preserve the bodies of the dead. Bodies were wrapped in bandages to stop them rotting. We now call these bodies 'mummies'.

How did the Egyptians preserve the bodies of the dead?

1. First, the body was embalmed to help preserve it. Special priests, called embalmers washed the body in palm oil and removed all of the organs. The brain was pulled out through the nose using a copper hook. The heart was the only organ that was left in the body. The organs were then dried and placed in four canopic jars next to the mummy in their tombs.

The four canopic jars all looked different:

- **Qebehsenuf** (a falcon) protected the intestines,
- **Duamutel** (a jackal) protected the stomach,
- **Hapy** (a baboon) protected the lungs,
- **Imsety** (a human) protected the liver.

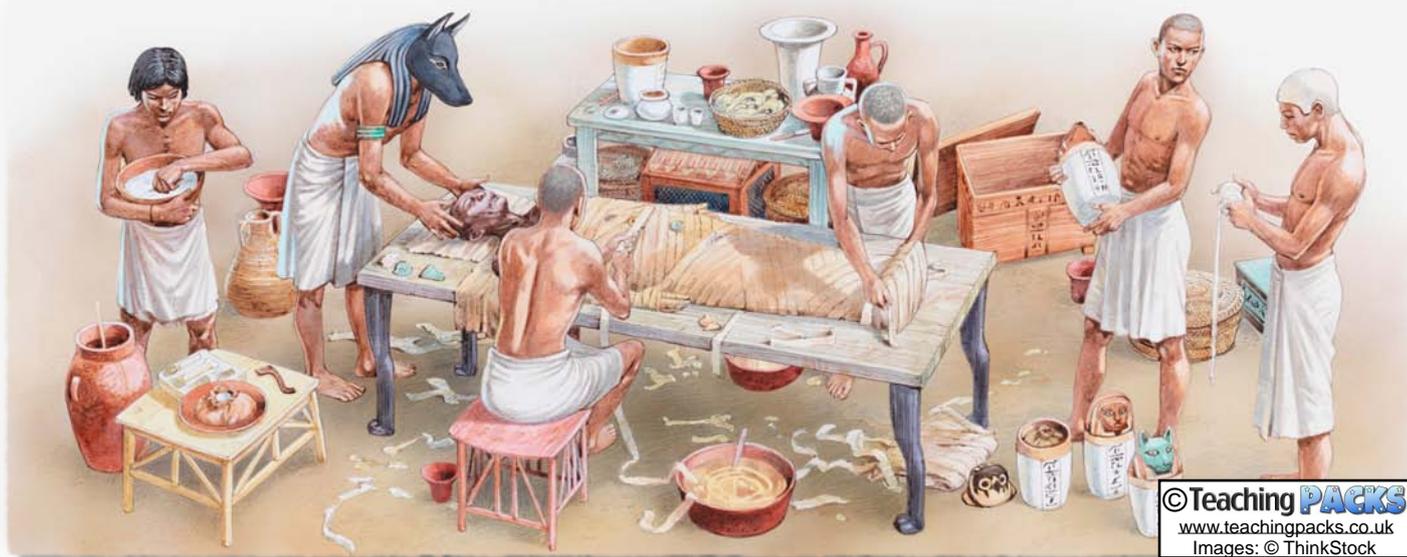
Did you Know?

The Egyptians even mummified their pets to keep them company in the afterlife.

2. Next, the body was covered in a natural salt called natron, which was dug up from the desert. This soaked up any body fluids and dried the body out. Richer people, like the Pharaoh, were left in natron for longer periods of time.

3. After that, the body was cleaned and stuffed with saw dust, rags or sand and sweet smelling spices. Then it was wrapped in bandages, which were soaked in oil. The very rich were wrapped in fine linen bandages. Poorer people were wrapped in old linen cloth or sheets. Jewels and amulets (charms) were placed between the layers of bandages to protect the person in the afterlife.

4. Finally, the linen covering the body was painted in sticky resin to stick the bandages together. A mask was put over their face and it was placed in a wooden case the shape of a person. A very important person would have been placed in several mummy cases and even a stone sarcophagus.



Mummification in Ancient Egypt

1) Add the missing word to this sentence from the introduction:

They also believed that it was important to _____ the bodies of the dead.

2) According to the text, what are 'mummies'?

3) What was the first step in preserving a body? Tick the correct answer:

- Cleaning the body,
- Embalming it,
- Stuffing it with saw dust, rags, sand and spices.
- Covering the body in natron,

4) What was used to pull the brain out through the nose?

5) What is natron?

6) Why were jewels and amulets placed between the layers of bandages?

7) Complete the table by writing **Rich** or **Poor** in each row, to show the differences between the mummification of rich and poor people.

Description	Rich or Poor?
Left in natron for longer periods of time.	
Wrapped in old linen bandages.	
Wrapped in fine linen bandages.	

8) Which type of canopic jar protected the liver?

9) Why did the Egyptians mummify their pets?

10) Why do you think the ancient Egyptians spent so much time taking care of a person's body after they had died?

Mummification in Ancient Egypt

1) Add the missing word to this sentence from the introduction:

They also believed that it was important to preserve the bodies of the dead.

2) According to the text, what are 'mummies'?

Bodies of dead people that were wrapped in bandages to stop them rotting.

3) What was the first step in preserving a body? Tick the correct answer:

- Cleaning the body,
- Embalming it,
- Stuffing it with saw dust, rags, sand and spices.
- Covering the body in natron,

4) What was used to pull the brain out through the nose?

A copper hook.

5) What is natron?

Natural salt.

6) Why were jewels and amulets placed between the layers of bandages?

To protect the person in the afterlife.

7) Complete the table by writing **Rich** or **Poor** in each row, to show the differences between the mummification of rich and poor people.

Description	Rich or Poor?
Left in natron for longer periods of time.	Rich
Wrapped in old linen bandages.	Poor
Wrapped in fine linen bandages.	Rich

8) Which type of canopic jar protected the liver?

Imsety (a human).

9) Why did the Egyptians mummify their pets?

To keep them company in the afterlife.

10) Why do you think the ancient Egyptians spent so much time taking care of a person's body after they had died?

Answers may include references to the Egyptians' belief in life after death and the need to preserve the body.

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Because the ancient Egyptians believed in life after death, they also believed that it was important to preserve the bodies of the dead. Bodies were wrapped in bandages to stop them rotting. We now call these bodies 'mummies'.

How did the Egyptians preserve the bodies of the dead?

1. Before wrapping a body in bandages, the body was embalmed to help preserve it. Embalmers washed the body in palm oil and removed all of the organs. The brain was pulled out through the nose using a copper hook. The heart was the only organ that was left in the body. The organs were then dried and placed in four canopic jars next to the mummy in their tombs.

The four canopic jars all looked different:

1. **Qebhsenuf** (a falcon) protected the intestines,
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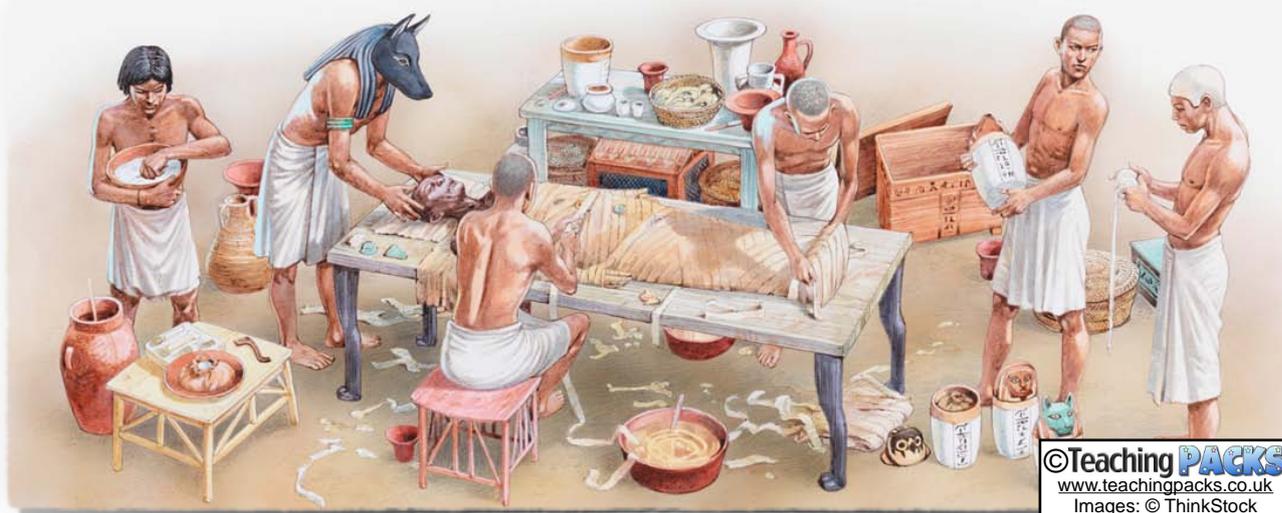
Did you Know?

The Egyptians even mummified their pets to keep them company in the afterlife.

2. Once the organs were removed, the body was covered in a natural salt called natron, which was dug up from the desert. This soaked up any body fluids and dried the body out. Richer people were left in natron for longer periods of time. A Pharaoh might lay in natron for 70 days.

3. Once the body was finished in the natron, it was cleaned and stuffed with saw dust, rags or sand and sweet smelling spices. It was then wrapped in bandages, which were soaked in oil. The very rich were wrapped in fine linen bandages but poor people were wrapped in old linen cloth or sheets. Jewels and amulets were placed between the layers of bandages to protect the person in the afterlife.

4. Once the mummy was wrapped, the linen covering them was painted in sticky resin. A mask was put over their face and it was placed in a wooden case that was shaped like a person. A very important person would have been placed in several mummy cases and even a stone sarcophagus.



Mummification in Ancient Egypt

- 1) What did embalmers use to wash the body?

- 2) Which of these organs was left in the body? Tick the correct answer:
 The stomach,
 The lungs,
 The liver,
 The heart.

- 3) Where did the ancient Egyptians get natron from?

- 4) Why did the embalmers cover the body in natron?

- 5) For how long might a Pharaoh have laid in natron?

- 6) Name three things that were used to stuff the body:

- 7) Add the missing word to this sentence from the text:

The Egyptians even mummified their pets to keep them company in the _____.

- 8) Rewrite this sentence using the present tense:
A mask was put over their face and it was placed in a wooden case that was shaped like a person.

- 9) Can you think of a synonym for *preserve*?

- 10) Would you like to have been an embalmer at the time of the ancient Egyptians?
Explain your answer using information from the text.

Mummification in Ancient Egypt

1) What did embalmers use to wash the body?

Palm oil.

2) Which of these organs was left in the body? Tick the correct answer:

The stomach,

The lungs,

The liver,

The heart.

3) Where did the ancient Egyptians get natron from?

It was dug up from the desert.

4) Why did the embalmers cover the body in natron?

To soak up any body fluids and dried the body out.

5) For how long might a Pharaoh have laid in natron?

70 days.

6) Name three things that were used to stuff the body:

Answers include saw dust, rags, sand and sweet smelling spices.

7) Add the missing word to this sentence from the text:

The Egyptians even mummified their pets to keep them company in the afterlife.

8) Rewrite this sentence using the present tense:

A mask was put over their face and it was placed in a wooden case that was shaped like a person.

A mask is put over their face and it is placed in a wooden case that is shaped like a person.

9) Can you think of a synonym for *preserve*?

Conserve, keep, protect, retain, sustain, mummify.

10) Would you like to have been an embalmer at the time of the ancient Egyptians?

Explain your answer using information from the text.

Answers will vary.

Mummification in Ancient Egypt

Because the ancient Egyptians believed in life after death, they also believed that it was important to preserve the bodies of the dead. Bodies were wrapped in bandages to stop them rotting. We now call this process mummification. It was a very expensive process so it was mostly reserved for the rich.

How did the Egyptians preserve the bodies of the dead?

1. Before wrapping a body in bandages, the body was embalmed to help preserve it. Special priests called embalmers, having first washed the body in palm oil, removed all of the organs through a cut in the left hand side of the body. The job was very skilful, demanding that the Embalmers perform the correct rituals and say prayers throughout the process, as well as understand the anatomy of the human body. The brain was broken up and pulled out through the nasal passages using a copper hook. The heart was the only organ that was left in the body due to the Egyptian belief that it was the organ of reasoning. They also believed that in the Afterlife the heart would be weighed to find out how a person had behaved while they were alive. The organs were then dried and placed in four canopic jars next to the mummy in their tombs.

The four canopic jars all looked different:

1. **Qebehsenuef** (a falcon) protected the intestines,
2. **Duamutel** (a jackal) protected the stomach,
3. **Hapy** (a baboon) protected the lungs,
4. **Imsety** (a human) protected the liver.

Did you Know?

The Egyptians even mummified their pets to keep them company in the afterlife.

2. Once the organs were removed, the body was covered in a natural salt called natron, which was dug up from the desert. This soaked up any body fluids and dried the body out. The length of time a body was left in natron was determined by their status, with the most important members of society being left for longer. A Pharaoh might lay in natron for 70 days! The fluids and rags used were later buried with the mummy.

3. Once the body was finished in the natron, it was cleaned and stuffed with saw dust, rags or sand and sweet smelling spices. False eyes were also added. It was then wrapped in bandages, which had been soaked in oil. The wrapping took place in a specific order, starting with the head. The fingers and toes were individually wrapped. The very rich were wrapped in the finest linen bandages but poor people were wrapped in old linen cloth or sheets. Jewels and amulets were placed between the layers of bandages to protect the person in the afterlife. More rituals were performed and the spells from the Book of the Dead were put in the mummy's hands.

4. Once the mummy was wrapped, the linen covering them was painted in sticky resin to bind the linen together. A mask was put over the face and it was placed in a wooden case the shape of a person. A very important person would have been placed in several mummy cases and even a stone sarcophagus.



Mummification in Ancient Egypt

- 1) Why were bodies wrapped in bandages?
- 2) Why was mummification mostly reserved for the rich?
- 3) The embalmers had to understand anatomy. Can you write a definition of *anatomy*?
- 4) Which part of the body did the embalmers wrap first?
- 5) Spells were placed in the hands of the mummy. Which book did these come from?
- 6) What was used to bind the linen together when the mummy was wrapped?
- 7) What tasks did the embalmers complete during each of the four steps of the mummification process?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
- 8) Why wasn't the heart removed from the body?
- 9) Complete the missing parts of the table below:

Name	Animal	Organ
Qebehseneuf	Falcon	Intestines
Duamutel	Jackal	Stomach
Hapy	Baboon	Lungs
Imsety	Human	Liver

- 10) Would you like to have been an embalmer at the time of the ancient Egyptians?
Explain your answer using information from the text.

Mummification in Ancient Egypt

- 1) Why were bodies wrapped in bandages?
To stop them rotting.
- 2) Why was mummification mostly reserved for the rich?
Because it was a very expensive process.
- 3) The embalmers had to understand anatomy. Can you write a definition of *anatomy*?
The study of the structure of the human body.
- 4) Which part of the body did the embalmers wrap first?
The head.
- 5) Spells were placed in the hands of the mummy. Which book did these come from?
The Book of the Dead.
- 6) What was used to bind the linen together when the mummy was wrapped?
Sticky resin.
- 7) What tasks did the embalmers complete during each of the four steps of the mummification process?
 - 1) **Embalming the body and removing the organs.**
 - 2) **Drying out the body with natron.**
 - 3) **Cleaning, stuffing and wrapping the body in bandages.**
 - 4) **Placing a mask on their face and putting the body in a mummy case and sarcophagus.**
- 8) Why wasn't the heart removed from the body?
The Egyptians believed that it was the organ of reasoning and it would be weighed in the Afterlife to find out how a person had behaved while they were alive.
- 9) Complete the missing parts of the table below:

Name	Animal	Organ
Qebehseuef	Falcon	Intestines
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- 10) Would you like to have been an embalmer at the time of the ancient Egyptians?
Explain your answer using information from the text.
Answers will vary.