
The History of Mummies in Egypt

Mummies are very fascinating things. Egyptians preserved peoples' bodies in many different ways according to their religion or social status. As part of the ancient Egyptian culture, they believed that when a person died, they made a journey to the next world. They believed that in order to live in the next world, their body had to be preserved a certain way.

An ordinary body begins to decompose after death. In order to prevent a body from decomposing, it is necessary to deprive the body from moisture and remove the tissue. Ancient Egyptians began to use a process called mummification to preserve a dead body. This involved embalming the body and then wrapping it in thin strips of linen. It was important in their religion to preserve the dead body as if it was real and still living. These preservatives were so successful that today we can view the mummified body of an injection and have a good idea of what he or she looked like in life, 3,000 years ago.

The mummification process took around 70 days to complete, these were the steps:

The body was washed. A cut was made on the left side of the abdomen and the internal organs - intestines, liver, lungs, stomach, were removed and stored in jars.

The heart, which the Ancient Egyptians believed to be intelligence, was left in the body for use in the next life.

The body and the internal organs were packed with natron salt for forty days to remove all moisture. The dried organs were wrapped in linen and placed in canonic jars.

The body was cleaned and the dried skin rubbed with oil.

The body was packed with sawdust and rags and the open cuts sealed with wax.

The body was wrapped in linen bandages. About 20 layers were used and this took 15 to 20 days.

A death mask was placed over the bandages.

The bandaged body was placed in a shroud (a large sheet of cloth) which was secured with linen strips.

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The body was then placed in a decorated mummy case or coffin.

The slaves, who took care of the Pharaoh, would set up and store the pharaoh's body in large tunnels which were located in pyramids. The people supplied the dead body with buckets of water and jars of food for the next life.

They also included jewelry, gold, types of artwork, and other necessities and special/important things the pharaoh admired. Egyptians took mummification as a very serious task. Everything was done at very precise measures and according to how the pharaoh wanted it when they passed away.

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