



Ancient Egypt | History, Religion, Pharaoh & Facts

History of Ancient Egypt

We currently live in a world of filters and heavily edited pictures, so much so that an image presented on social media may not look much like the real-life version. If you have ever been accused of overusing filters – or heavily editing your pictures – you should know that the Egyptian royalty was up to this kind of thing centuries before our current era! Egyptian art often depicts the pharaohs as handsome and slender; however, recent examinations of mummies have found that many of them were overweight and unhealthy. This fact is not surprising when you consider they regularly dined on bread, honey, and beer.

The legendary Queen Hatshepsut, who ruled in the 15th century BCE, is seen on her sarcophagus as slender and toned; however, historians now believe she was obese and balding. There was another reason for the disconnect between how Hatshepsut looked in depictions and how she looked in real life. Let's peer behind the gilded mask of these ancient rulers to find out what they were like and how they lived.

Facts about Ancient Egypt





Time period :	Predynastic Period (before 3100 BCE) to the end of the Roman Period (395 CE)
Pharaohs:	Powerful kings
Pyramids:	Built huge tombs for their rulers
Writing:	Used symbols called hieroglyphics
Religion:	Believed in many gods and the afterlife

Ancient Egypt pharaoh





The first Ancient Egypt Pharaoh to have been Narmer – and the last to have been Cleopatra VII – Egyptian royalty was prominent for well over three thousand years! These dates might be disputed, as Narmer was the first Egyptian king to unite the country peacefully, and there were kings before him. Also, as Cleopatra VII was from the Macedonian Greek Ptolemy dynasty, some may not class her as an authentic Egyptian Pharaoh. Nevertheless, give or take a few years, it's still an impressively long time when you consider it has been only just over two thousand years since the start of the current era.

The royals – and their nearest and dearest – enjoyed a great deal of pampering. They had official sandal bearers, a chief clothes washer, and fan bearers to ensure they were always comfortable and clean. As for presentation, they had official manicurists and a multitude of wig preparers that made and maintained their glorious wigs in the latest fashions. These stylists probably had a special place in court and were even honored after death in some cases.

At Saqqara, there lies a tomb is commonly known as the “Tomb of the Hairdressers,” which was the last resting place of two men who – according to prominent Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass – were likely to be brothers. One of the texts, a contractual agreement for the funeral arrangements, reads, “The chief manicurists of Pharaoh, venerated close to the great god, Niankhkhnum and Kumhotep.” For Ancient Egypt royalty, how they were presented was of the utmost importance.

Wigs were seen as signs of status, and while only enslaved people and servants were forbidden from wearing wigs, the royal hairpieces were by far the most elaborate you could find. Wigs served multiple purposes. They were large, gave shade from the sun, and were more breathable than hats. These wigs were just as complex as modern-day versions, with a fiber-netting skull cap to which strands of material were attached.

The most expensive wigs were made of human hair, but they could be made of wool flax, palm fibers, or numerous other materials. Mostly the wigs were black and occasionally blond, although it is said that Queen Nefertiti wore wigs that were colored dark blue.



Ancient Egypt Wigs



Ancient Egypt Wigs

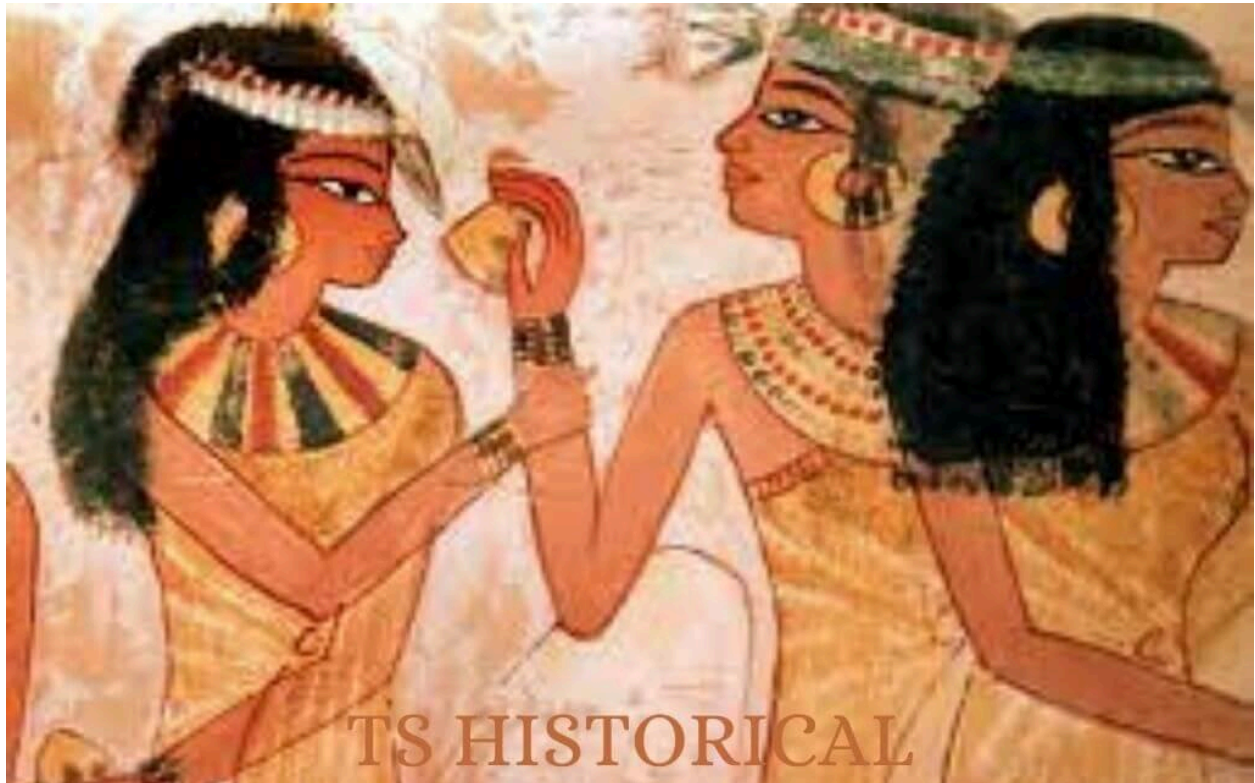
The royal wigs followed trends, with the earliest dynasties wearing cropped curly wigs, while later women began wearing long styles that added bulk and length to their natural hair. During the Middle Kingdom, wigs were worn with hair coils that draped over both shoulders.

The New Kingdom saw women's wigs become even larger to cover the shoulders completely. Men in the New Kingdom wore less bulky wigs that were much longer in the front than the back. The wigs were decorated with gold, colorful ribbons, and beads for special occasions; they were sometimes made even more ornate by adding extravagant headbands and caps. But it wasn't just head hair that was fake! Ancient Egypt royals had beard wigs too. These chin hairpieces allowed them to keep clean-shaven for comfort and have a manly beard for special occasions. It is believed that Queen Hatshepsut wore a false beard during her reign as the self-proclaimed pharaoh, perhaps to lend legitimacy to her rule.

The Ancient Egypt royals also wore the best fabrics and the most fabulous adornments. While sandals made of papyrus or palm were popular amongst the poor, the upper classes wore sandals made of leather. Over eighty sets of shoes were found in **Tutankhamun's tomb**, including one pair made from gold! Like many societies, the rich and powerful ate very differently from the Egyptian people. The diet of the ruling class was much richer and more varied than that of the commoners.



Foods of Ancient Egypt



Eat Like an Egyptian

The Ancient Egypt royals ate more meat, such as honey-roasted gazelle, beef, pork, mutton, fish, and poultry, although the poorer classes ate fish and poultry as well. Meat and dairy were staples for royalty, along with rare fruits such as pomegranates and sweet cakes. The bread was big on the menu and washed down with barley beer flavored with dates or honey and wine made from grapes, plums, and pomegranates. It has been discovered that this sugar-rich diet meant that some Egyptian rulers had diabetes. As with many rulers throughout the world, the Egyptian royals were intrinsically linked with the Ancient Egyptian Gods.



About Ancient Egypt religion

The Ancient Egypt people believed that the pharaoh was the mediator between the world of man and the gods, and that he would become divine upon his death, with his sacred powers passed to the next pharaoh. This connection to the divine, especially to the [Ancient Egyptian Gods and Goddesses](#), afforded the pharaoh and his family great luxuries. Whether the pharaohs truly believed they were the link to the gods is debatable, but as the divine ruler, they took their duties seriously. Their job was to preserve Maat – the god-given order.

The pharaoh was responsible for the economic and spiritual welfare of the people and was the dispenser of justice among his subjects. However, with this title also came the burden of responsibility. Any crop failure, natural disaster, or plague, and the people would assume the pharaoh wasn't doing their job correctly. When it came to marriage, the Ancient Egypt dynasties liked to keep it in the family. Perhaps stemming from the belief that they were related to the gods,

Ancient Egypt preferred to keep the royal bloodline free from external influence. Of course, we know where that leads, and many of Egypt's royals suffered from hereditary diseases brought on by generations of inbreeding. Thanks to the Egyptians' knack for record-keeping, we know many stories about specific members of Egyptian royalty. However, many pharaohs were effectively removed from history until their rediscovery by modern archaeologists.

The overweight, balding, and fake beard-wearing Queen Hatshepsut has already been mentioned. Her reign was unconventional but highly successful overall. She came to power sometime around 1479 BCE after Thutmose II – her husband and half-brother – died. She first ruled as regent, as Thutmose II's son (with his second wife) was still a baby. However, when Thutmose III was ready to rule, Hatshepsut decided to take full power instead of giving him his rightful place. To legitimize her reign, she often had herself depicted with a man's torso, as well as donning a fake beard. Hatshepsut's reign was prosperous and relatively peaceful, as it appears she preferred diplomacy and trade over war.



Towards the end of her reign, she allowed **Thutmose III** to rule alongside her, with him becoming pharaoh after her death. Hatshepsut was interred alongside her father in the Valley of the Kings. But her story was almost lost. At the end of Thutmose III's reign, an attempt was made to remove all references to Hatshepsut's time as pharaoh. Her name was removed from the official king list, her statues were torn down, and her monuments were defaced.



Egyptian gods: Hathor, Ra, Anubis, and Ma'at in ancient mythology.

No one truly knows why this happened, but it is speculated that Thutmose III wanted the historical succession of pharaohs to run from Thutmose I and Thutmose II to Thutmose III without interruption – especially from a successful female leader. Hatshepsut was nearly erased from the historical record until – in 1822 – inscriptions about her were decoded in Dayr-al-Bahri, a temple designed as her funerary monument. Today,

The most famous Ancient Egypt pharaoh is probably Tutankhamun, more often called “King Tut.” However, this has more to do with the discovery of his tomb – and the subsequent “curse of the pharaoh” hysteria – than his legacy as ruler. A product of



traditional inbreeding, Tutankhamun was only around nine years of age when he ascended to the throne around 1333 BCE. He was tall, frail, and had a club foot. While it was initially thought he was murdered at the young age of nineteen, CT scans revealed that his death was likely due to infections from malaria and a broken left leg.

His tomb was one of the contradictions. Despite having a 24-pound solid gold portrait mask, three golden coffins, and over 5,000 artifacts, his tomb was so small that the largest of the four gilded wooden shrines could barely fit into the burial chamber. Tutankhamun's interment was also rather strange. Plenty of evidence suggests his burial was a rush job.

Firstly, his toes had been severed by carpenters who sealed the sarcophagus. As the dead king's toes prevented the sarcophagus from closing, they had been simply cut off and left on the floor where they lay until the tomb was discovered in 1922. Spots on the wall suggested that the paint hadn't dried on the walls before the tomb was sealed, and – strangest of all – rushed mummification meant that Tutankhamun's body combusted after being buried.

A few generations after his death, Tutankhamun had been all but forgotten. The entrance was clogged with debris and built over by the workman's huts. In 1279 BCE, Ramesses II came to power, widely thought of as the greatest pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty. Ramesses II's grandfather, Ramesses I, brought their family from commoner status to royalty with his military talent. After Ramesses II's older brother died, he was named prince regent at fourteen. By twenty-two, he had proven he had the same skills as his namesake and led the Ancient Egypt army. However, he was not only adept at war; he also established the first recorded peace treaty during a conflict with the Hittites.

Ramesses II was a lover and a fighter. He had over two hundred wives and concubines and fathered around one hundred children. During the thirtieth year of his prosperous reign, he declared himself a god, and there are more colossal statues of him than any other pharaoh. He reigned for just over sixty-six years, and the son that succeeded him was nearly sixty when he ascended to the throne! Cleopatra is probably one of the most famous Egyptian Queens, although she was actually Macedonian. She was descended from one of Alexander the Great's generals – called Ptolemy – who ruled Ancient Egypt



after Alexander's death. However, Cleopatra was born in Egypt and was the first of the Ptolemaic line to learn Egyptian.

Although a lot is made of Cleopatra's beauty, this stems from Roman propaganda trying to write her off as sexually manipulative. Cleopatra's main asset was her education. She spoke almost a dozen languages and was proficient in math, astronomy, and philosophy. Egyptian sources describe her as someone who "elevated the ranks of scholars and enjoyed their company." Whether she was a great beauty or not, there is no denying her sense of style.

She famously soaked the sails of her ship in perfume made of henna flowers when she sailed to Rome, intending the scent to precede her arrival. Arriving in Rome on a golden barge with purple sails and dressed as the goddess Aphrodite, she definitely had a flair for the dramatic. Perhaps surprisingly, more time had elapsed between the building of the Great Pyramid and her reign than has passed since then. Royalty in Ancient Egypt was as varied as you would imagine it would be over such a lengthy period. However, it seems the one thing they had in common was their flamboyant style, luxurious lifestyle, and innate desire to be remembered.

People Also ask?

How ancient Egypt looked?

Ancient Egypt was known for its Grand temples, pyramids, popular Nile cities, and great desert landscapes.

How ancient Egypt ended?

Ancient Egypt was conquered by the Romans in 30 BCE.

Why ancient Egypt was the best civilization?

Ancient Egypt was one of the greatest civilizations because of its advanced achievements in architecture, medicine, writing, art, and a stable, centralized



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