

How To Make A Mummy

Do you want to make a mummy? Firstly, you're going to need a dead person. It helps if they are royal or very wealthy: they're the only ones with enough money to afford the process. Once you've got your deceased pharaoh, it's time to get started.

The first step is to give that body a good wash. Wine and water from the River Nile are the embalmer's preferred choice. Once it's nice and clean, make a cut along the side of the body and take out all those important organs. It's probably a good idea to put them somewhere safe; you'll be needing them later.

Okay, I won't lie to you. The next bit is the worst. You will need a special hook small enough to fit up a nostril. Push it up into the skull and wiggle it around a lot. This should scramble the brain and allow you to retrieve it piece by piece. Don't worry, us Ancient Egyptians believe that the brain is a pretty useless organ.

Hopefully, your pharaoh should be feeling pretty gutted about now (did you see what I did there?). Pick up the liver, lungs, intestines and stomach (you did keep them, I hope!) and give them a good clean. Place them carefully into the set of **canopic** jars, making sure to put them in the correct ones. Give the heart a wash and place it back into the body. Anubis will need that to weigh their soul.

Grab your bucket of **natron** (a special Ancient Egyptian salt) and ram as much of it into the body as you can. Try not to leave any space at all in there. This bit can be quite messy! The **natron** should soak up all of the moisture. It's probably best to leave it 40 days or so to do its job.

Once your pharaoh has fully dried out, scoop the **natron** back out (throw it away, it's horrible on chips) and fill the body back up with spices and old strips of cloth. You don't want it to lose its shape.

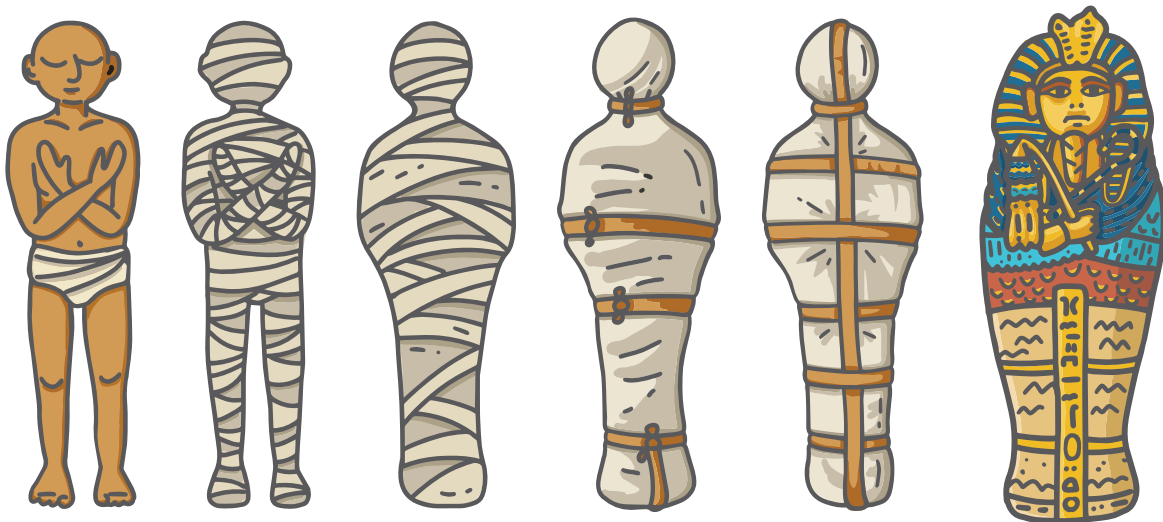
Finally, grab some strips of your finest linen and wrap the body as tightly



as you can. If the person was really popular, and you haven't already stolen them, weave some of their jewellery and precious stones into the fabric. Once it's wrapped, put your mummy in a coffin. If you have time, place that coffin into another one. Next stop, the tomb!

More Mummy Fun:

You can make your own **natron** with a mixture of table salt and bicarbonate of soda. Try using this to mummify a tomato. It works best if you scoop out the inside of the tomato first and rub the whole thing down with alcohol hand sanitizer. Pack it tightly with **natron** and check on it after 40 days.



SUMMARY FOCUS

1. What do you need before you can make a mummy?
2. What should you do to the organs before placing them in the canopic jars?
3. Explain why you need to keep the organs safe when you've removed them.
4. What is it important to do to a tomato before you pack it with natron?
5. When should you remove the natron from your mummy?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

- I** Why is it important that the person you are mummifying had money?
- V** Find a word or phrase that means the same as having a lot of money.
- E** What do you think it means when it says "if you haven't already stolen them" about the person's jewels?
- V** Why has the author made a joke about the pharaoh being "gutted"?
- E** What effect does the use of chatty language and contractions have on you as a reader?