

King Tutankhamun

Ancient Egypt



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Early Years (Age 1-9)

Tutankhamun's Father was King Akhenaten, he was married to Nefertiti. In his reign, he was known for building the city Armana, moving the capital from Thebes to Armana, encouraged lifelike art, and changed the Religion of Egypt from polytheistic (many Gods) to monotheistic (one main God). He described the God Aten as the sun, the main God, and all other Gods as stars. King Akhenaten named his son Tutenkhaten, meaning "Living image of Aten". The Egyptians didn't like the new religion, so after King Akhenaten died, he was erased from the list of Kings.



King Tut was born in 1342, but it's difficult to say who his mother is. King Akhenaten was married to Nefertiti, but she was probably not Tutankhamun's mother. His mother was the probably the King's sister. Archaeologists call her the "Younger Woman" but do not know her name. Archaeologists have done DNA tests, but it's difficult to understand the results because generations of Pharaohs married their first cousins and other close family members, so the DNA is very similar.

To reveal more information about King Tut's childhood, his mummified body was studied. He had a deformity in his left foot and needed a cane to walk. He also had several strains of malaria which provides the oldest genetic proof of malaria. He also likely had sickle cell disease, Koehler disease and other bone weaknesses. There were many canes found in his tomb.



The Boy King (Age 9-19)

King Akhenaten died when Tutenkhaten was only 8 years old. He became the King and married his half-sister Ankhesenamun. They had two daughters who died at birth. Kheperkheperure was King Tut's mentor and DNA suggests he may have been King Tut's great uncle. He had a lot of influence on King Tut's decisions and helped him rule. King Tut moved the capital city back to Thebes and had his father's tomb moved from Armana to the valley of kings. This gained a lot of support from the people so King Tut rejected Aten as the one true God and went back to traditional Egyptian Gods. He changed his name from Tutenkhaten to Tutankhamen as a true sign of his religious decisions.



Under his 10-year rule, King Tut restored many temples that were destroyed by his father and he destroyed a lot of statues for the God Aten which had been created by his father. Other than undo a lot of strange changes his father made, King Tut didn't do much. He didn't expand borders, he didn't invent anything, he didn't build anything great and he died at age 19. How can he be one of the most famous Pharaohs of all time?

King Tutankhamun's Death (Age 19)

King Tut died in 1325 BC. Since both of his daughters died at birth, he had no clear successors. This was the end of his family to rule. After his death, Kheperkheperure became the Pharaoh for 4 years and he was the second last pharaoh.

Scientists studied the mummy and the cause of death was a badly broken and infected leg. There are a few popular theories about how his leg was injured. King Tut loved hunting Ostrich and had a fan made of ostrich feathers placed very near to him in his tomb, suggesting he was killed by an ostrich. On the fan are depictions of King Tut hunting and coming home victorious with ostriches. Other theories include a hippopotamus attack or a chariot crash because of how badly the bones in the leg were broken.

King Tutankhamun's Burial (Age 19)

King Tut died young and unexpectedly. The Egyptians were building King Tut a tomb near his grandfather in the valley of kings, but it was not complete when he died. His mentor, Kheperkheperure, had a small tomb in the Valley of Kings and so King Tut was buried in this small unimportant tomb. King Tut was not buried in a pyramid as that tradition ended in 1700 BC. After that, most pharaohs were buried in the valley of kings.



In ancient Egypt, they believed whatever you are buried with will help you pass into the afterlife. King Tut was buried with over 5000 treasures in his tomb. He was buried wearing King Tut's mask and a lot of precious jewelry and then he was placed inside three coffins and a sarcophagus. The inner most coffin was made of solid gold and made to look like the King's body in the afterlife. The second one was made of wood and the feet stuck out very far. The third coffin was also wooden, but it was not big enough to fit the second coffin's wooden feet, so they cut the toes off the second wooden coffin so it would fit inside the third wooden coffin. All three of these were placed inside a stone sarcophagus for safe passage to the afterlife.



Discovering the Tomb

King Tut didn't accomplish much as king, died young, he and his father were both removed from the list of Kings. King Tut was so unimportant and unpopular that no one wanted to raid his tomb! Soon after the tomb was sealed, debris from another tomb blocked the entrance of this

tomb. Within 20 years, the Egyptians had already forgotten they buried a Pharaoh there and they built stone houses over the tomb entrance for construction workers to live in.

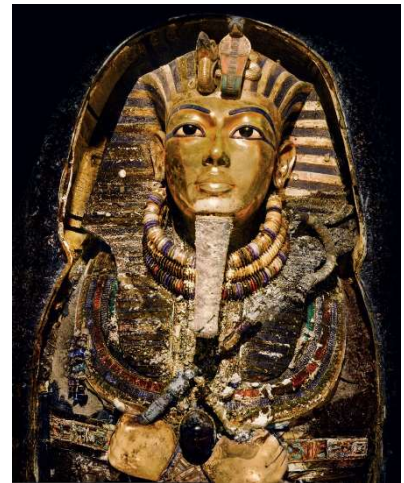
The discovery of King Tut's tomb is so important because it was the only tomb ever found that was still sealed! It had not been opened in 3300 years and no one had stolen any of the treasures from the tomb. This was a true look at ancient Egypt, and it sparked a new wave of studies into the ancient civilization.



In 1922, the tomb was opened. 5398 items were buried with King Tut to ensure that he remained strong, wealthy, and well fed in the afterlife. This included King Tut's famous mask, many canes, a leopard-skin cloak, four game boards, six chariots, 30 wine jars, and 46 bows, both of his daughters, an ostrich feather fan, daggers made from meteorites, a solid cold coffin, thrones, archery bows, trumpets, a lotus chalice, food, sandals and fresh linen underwear. It took Howard Carter 10 years to catalog and photograph all these items! The tomb has been restored and it is now open to the public for viewing. (See photo on cover page of report)

King Tut's Famous Mask

King Tut's famous mask was found on King Tut's body when they opened the tomb. It is now best known as a symbol for renewed interest in Ancient Civilizations. The mask contains 22.5 pounds (10 kg) made from 2 solid gold sheets that were hammered together. It has inlaid colored glass, lapis lazuli which was imported from Afghanistan, obsidian eyes from volcanic glass, quartz, and green feldspar. The mask is shaped to look like Osiris, the God of the underworld and it is for protection and safe entry into the afterlife.



Since King Tut died very suddenly, archaeologists think that many of the treasures buried with him aren't actually his. There is a theory that the famous mask was made as a gift from King Akhenaten to his wife Nefertiti. However, she was unable to produce a male heir for Akhenaten, so she was dismissed, and the mask was used for King Tut's burial instead.

In 2014, the 5.5 pound beard fell off when they were cleaning the mask. The workers tried to glue it back on, but it wasn't centered! In 2015, someone noticed the beard and they fixed it with beeswax, which the Ancient Egyptians used to use.