



QUEEN
NEFERTARI'S
EGYPT

New Orleans Museum of Art
NOMA



DAILY LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Archaeologists are scientists who study human history by uncovering objects and artifacts from research sites. These objects can help us better understand what life was like for the ancient Egyptians!

BEAUTY

Ancient Egyptians paid great attention to beauty and fashion, wearing the latest clothing, wigs, jewelry, and makeup styles. Kohl eye makeup was both beautiful and practical: it kept light and bacteria away from the wearer's eyes.



MUSIC

A **sistrum** is a rattle-like instrument played during dances and ceremonies. The shakers that provide percussive sounds are missing from this sistrum.



ARTIST'S TOOLS

Most paints were made from rocks and minerals. Artists used a palette and brush like this to apply paint to sculptures and murals. The brushes are made from plant materials!

Sistrum, Unknown provenance, Late Period, 25th–31st dynasty (about 712–332 BCE), Bronze, Cat. 6255
Brush, Dair el-Medina, New Kingdom, 18th–20th dynasty (about 1539–1075 BCE), Vegetal fibers, S. 07661

JOURNEY TO THE AFTERLIFE

The Ancient Egyptians devoted lots of time and attention to preparing for the spirit's journey to the afterlife. They placed helpful texts along with small tokens for good luck and safety, called **amulets**, inside tombs to help them on their journey.



These sandals belonged to Queen Nefertari! The Egyptians believed that the afterlife was similar to life on earth—including sleeping, dressing, and eating.



Small **shabti** figurines were believed to help take care of a work and chores in the afterlife. This shabti is made of a bright blue material called **faience**, which was believed to harness the perpetual shimmer of the sun.

Sandals, Tomb of Nefertari (QV66), Valley of the Queens, New Kingdom, 19th dynasty, reign of Ramesses II (about 1279–1213 BCE), Vegetal fibers (palm leaves), S. 05160/01 & 02
Shabti of Pharaoh Seti I, Unknown provenance, New Kingdom, 19th dynasty, reign of Seti I (about 1290–1279 BCE), Faience, Cat. 2503

LEARN MORE at noma.org/exhibitions/queen-nefertaris-egypt/ and find information on youth and family programs and activities at noma.org/families

LET'S LOOK
Can you find the objects to the right in the galleries?
What can a personal object tell us about the person who used it?

GALLERY ACTIVITY
List some similar items you use today. What do you use to get ready in the morning, make music, or communicate with others?

MAKE AT HOME

Imagine you are an archaeologist of the future! Choose items from your home to "discover" and analyze. Make a drawing, take notes, and create a museum-inspired display.

Throughout this guide, you will find key words, prompts for **close looking** and discussion, **gallery activities**, and tips for exploring ancient Egypt **at home**!

The name “Nefertari” was popular in ancient Egypt! It includes the prefix “nefer,” which means “beautiful”.



In this large granite sculpture, we see Pharaoh Ramesses II sitting between the sun god Amun and the mother goddess Mut. The pharaoh was responsible for asking the gods to protect and take care of his people. Their locked arms indicate the closeness of Rameses II to the gods.

Statue of Ramesses II, Seated between the God Amun and the Goddess Mut, Temple of Amun, Karnak, New Kingdom, 19th dynasty, reign of Ramesses II (c. 1279–1213 BCE), granite. Museo Egizio, Turin, Italy



What is BCE?

Dates are labeled BCE (Before Common Era) or CE (Common Era) to indicate if a year took place before or after year 1.

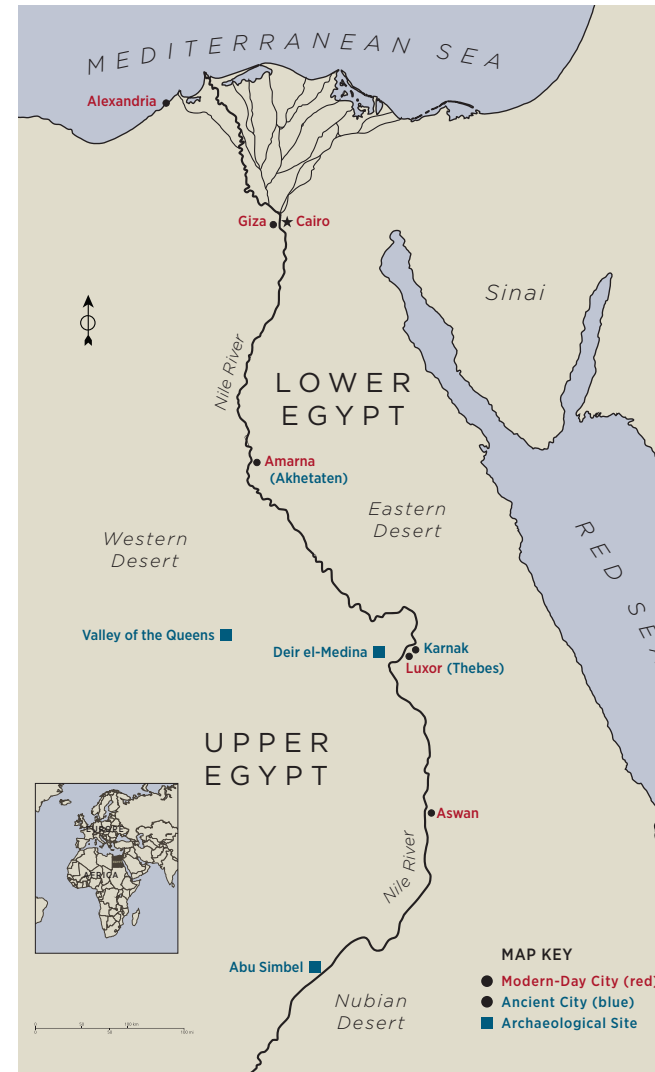
MEET QUEEN NEFERTARI

Queen Nefertari was a well-loved and respected ruler of ancient Egypt, known for her beauty and intelligence. She was married to a powerful **pharaoh**, or ruler, named Ramesses II.

Where is Egypt?

Egypt is located in northeastern Africa. Queen Nefertari lived in the ancient city of Thebes along the Nile River, the longest river in the world.

Cairo, the modern-day capital of Egypt, shares the same **latitude**, or distance from the equator, as New Orleans! For this reason, we have a similar subtropical climate.



When did Queen Nefertari rule?

Queen Nefertari lived during a period called *The New Kingdom*, nearly 3,500 years ago. To compare, the United States is only 304 years old!

Queen Nefertari's Egypt is organized by the Museo Egizio, Turin, and StArt, in collaboration with the New Orleans Museum of Art. The presentation in New Orleans is made possible by the generous support of New Orleans & Company; Louisiana Office of Cultural Development; the Eugenie and Joseph Jones Family Foundation; JPMorgan Chase & Co.; the Charitable Lead Annuity Trust under the Will of Louis Feil; the Booth-Bricker Fund; the Consulate General of Italy in Houston; Lake Lawn Metairie Funeral Home and Cemeteries, a Dignity Memorial provider; Nina Dhurandhar, MD; Mallory Savoie; Elisabeth French; and Kenya and Quentin Messer.

ANIMAL POWER

Animals held special importance to the ancient Egyptians. Many animals' features were associated with gods and goddesses. *Can you find the following goddesses in galleries 1 and 2?*



Statue of the Goddess Sekhmet, Temple of Amun, Karnak, New Kingdom, 18th dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III (about 1390–1353 BCE), grandodiorite. Museo Egizio, Turin, Italy

Sekhmet [SEK-met], “The Powerful One,” is a fearsome warrior and goddess of healing. Daughter of the sun god Ra, she often appears as a woman with a lion’s mane and a sun disc crown.

Bastet [BASS-tet] is the domesticated form of Sekhmet who appears as a house cat! She is known as the protector of women and children.

Hathor [HAA-thor], the goddess of joy, music, and rebirth, appears with a woman’s face, cow ears, and a curled headdress inspired by cows’ horns. You will find her image on musical instruments.



Amulet Representing the Goddess Taweret, Unknown provenance, Late Period, 26th - 31st dynasty (about 664–332 BCE), Faience, Cat. 538

Taweret [taaw-AIR-et], “The Great One,” appears with features of a hippopotamus. She is another fierce protector, known to look after children and soon-to-be mothers.



Stela with the Face of the Goddess Hathor, unknown provenance, New Kingdom, 19th dynasty (about 1292–1190 BCE), painted limestone. Museo Egizio, Turin, Italy

LET’S LOOK

Notice animal features like faces, ears, or paws. How do the goddesses’ animal features symbolize their powers?

GALLERY ACTIVITY

What are some ways that humans try to harness the powers of animals today? For example, in American culture, we often name sports teams after animals. Act out your example!

MAKE AT HOME

Draw yourself with animal features that represent *your* powers!



Researchers believe Queen Nefertari could read and write—a skill that few women had during her time. **Hieroglyphics** is a writing system that uses pictures and symbols instead of letters and words. Stories and messages written in hieroglyphs, especially those that were painted in Queen Nefertari’s temple and tomb, help us understand the Queen’s importance.