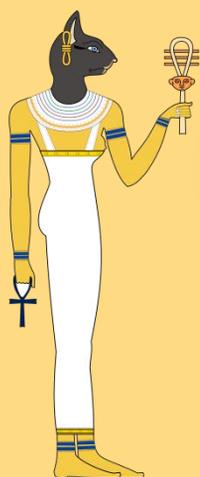


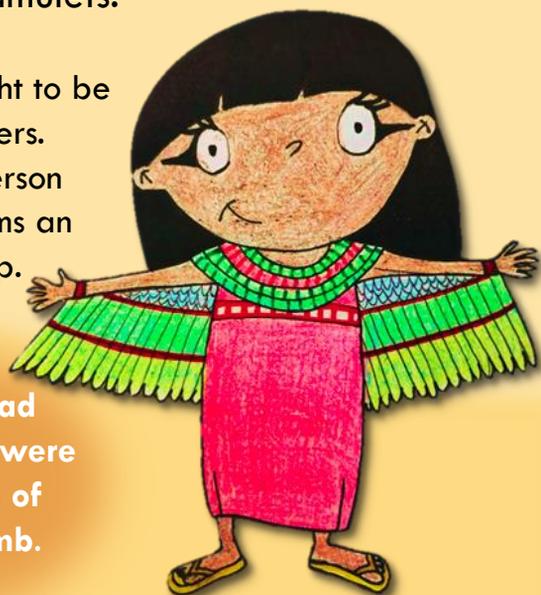
# Ancient Egyptian Amulets

Magic and religion were part of everyday life in Ancient Egypt. The Egyptians had objects and jewellery they believed had powers. Today we call these magical objects amulets.

There were different types of amulets. Some were thought to be protective, and others were thought to have healing powers. Amulets were also used in **mummification** to help the person make the journey to the **Netherworld**. Whatever problems an ancient Egyptian faced, there would be an amulet to help.



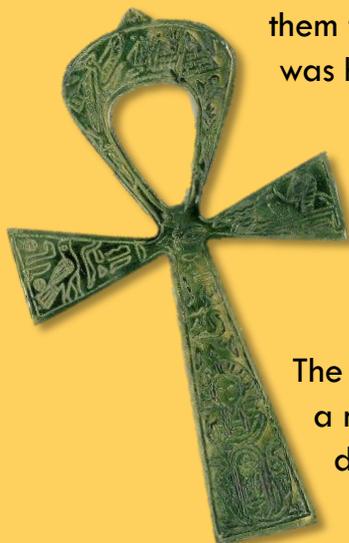
Amulets used to protect the dead are called **Funerary Amulets**. They were often placed inside the bandages of the mummy or placed in the tomb.



**Let's have a look at some common amulets...**

## Bastet

Bastet was one of the most loved Goddesses in Egypt. Cats became sacred to the Egyptians because of her and were sometimes **mummified**. She was the Goddess of women, pregnancy and the home. Egyptians who wanted to have children would leave **offerings** or wear an amulet of Bastet. The Egyptians also believed an amulet of Bastet could protect them from illnesses and evil spirits. A **festival** was held in honour of Bastet every year.



## Ankh

The Ankh was a **hieroglyph** that represented life. When placed on a mummy it was believed to give the gift of **eternal** life to the dead. Ankhs were often shown in the hands of Gods and Goddesses who had the power to give life.



## Djed

The Djed pillar represented the backbone of **Osiris**, King of the **Netherworld**. It would be placed on the mummy to strengthen the spine and help them stand up when they were reborn. The amulet could also be worn by living people. A **hieroglyph** in the form of Djed meant *stability*. Sometimes the djed and ankh amulets were combined, as you can see on the right.



## Bes

Bes protected pregnant women, babies and families. Many Egyptians would have a statue of Bes in their home. They believed that Bes watched over children and entertained them with dancing and music. If a baby smiled or giggled for no reason they thought that Bes must be nearby. He also protected the home from dangerous animals like snakes and scorpions, and if he was placed by a bed he could stop bad dreams. He is usually shown as a dwarf wearing a lion skin.



## Scarab

Scarabs were dung beetles. Ancient Egyptians believed that **funerary** scarabs would protect the dead from danger in the **Netherworld**.

They were placed over the mummy's heart with a spell to stop the heart from telling lies. They believed that your heart was judged by the Gods before you could enter the **Netherworld**. The dung beetle was seen as a symbol of rebirth because the Egyptians were reminded of the God **Khepri** rolling the sun across the sky when they saw the beetles rolling balls of dung.



# Try at Home

## Make your own amulets...

Use salt dough, play dough, clay, or even icing! Have a go at making your own Egyptian amulets. You could be inspired by one of the amulets you have read about or you might even want to design your own.



## Find out more...

You could research the words in bold to find out more about Egyptian beliefs. There are many more amulets to research too...try looking up **wadjet** eyes or **tawret** hippos.