

# Mummify a Tomato

Ancient Egyptians were famous for mummifying their dead. This method of preserving bodies was so successful that mummies remain preserved 3,000 years later. You might not be able to mummify a Pharaoh at home, but you can still create your own mummy. Follow these steps, and you will be going through the same processes that Ancient Egyptians followed all those years ago.

## You will need:

- A couple of fresh tomatoes.
- Salt.
- Bicarbonate of soda.
- An airtight tub or jar.
- A sharp knife.
- A spoon.
- Anti septic hand wash or hand gel.
- Kitchen roll.

## Method:

1. The Egyptians started by removing the insides from their dead. You need to do the same. Cut a tomato in half and scoop out the seeds and juice. If you really want to be like an Egyptian, create a small canopic jar for the tomato's "organs"!
2. One of the most important steps to a successful mummy is removing all bacteria. The Egyptians used embalming fluid for this - you can get the same effect with antiseptic hand gel. Use this to carefully wash your tomato. If you miss any part, it might rot, so take your time.
3. Back then, the Egyptians used a naturally occurring mixture called natron to dry out the body. Natron draws moisture into it, which meant the body dried a lot quicker. If your mummy isn't dry enough, then flies and other insects will start to destroy it. You can make your own natron by mixing salt and bicarbonate of soda. You need to mix them in equal parts and will need enough to completely fill and cover your tomato.
4. Place the tomato inside your airtight tub. Cover it over again with natron and leave it to mummify. If you want to see what a difference it makes, take the second tomato and leave it in another tub without preserving it.
5. Check your mummifying tomato every week to see how it is getting on. Try not to touch it too much as you will add bacteria to it.
6. If you want to see just how much the tomato dries out in the natron, weigh it at the end of step two and then again when it has finished mummifying.

**Now have a go at answering the questions about what you have just read. Make sure you answer in sentences. *The words in italics will help you to begin your sentences.***

1. What should you do before you remove all of the bacteria?

*Before removing the bacteria...*

2. Which should you do first: bury the tomato in natron or wash it in hand gel?

*You should...*

3. What effect does the natron have?

*Natron...*

4. How could you tell how much water the natron removed?

*You could tell how much water was removed...*

5. Why do you need a spoon?

*You need a spoon...*

6. What might attract flies to the body?

*Flies might be attracted...*

7. Which word tells you how to wash your tomato?

*The word...*

8. What would you mix together to make natron?

*To make natron, you should...*

9. Which word tells you that natron pulls moisture into it?

*The word...*

10. What other items do you think you could mummify this way?

*Using this method, you could also...*