

## Art Artifact: Canopic Jar

It was very important to ancient Egyptian religious beliefs that the human body was preserved. A method of artificial preservation, called mummification, was developed by the ancient Egyptians.

During the process of mummification, all of the major organs were removed and placed in canopic jars.



Canopic jars were used by ancient Egyptians to hold mummified remains. During the mummification process the organs of the human body were removed and preserved separately in canopic jars. The person's liver, intestines (guts), lungs and stomach were placed in canopic jars. Each organ was placed in a special jar with a top representing an animal or human head. The heart however, was left inside the body because the Egyptians believed that in the afterlife it would be weighed to see whether the person had led a good life.

The Canopic Jars were decorated with the heads of the four sons of Horus.

Each canopic jar guarded a different organ.

1. **Imsety** had a **human head**, protected the **liver**.
2. **Qebehsenuf** had the **head of a falcon** and guarded the **intestines**.
3. **Hapy** had a **baboon head** protected the **lungs**.
4. **Duamatef** had the **head of a jackal**, and guarded the **stomach**.

The four canopic jars were put into a special chest which went into the tomb with the mummy.