

Pyramids

Pyramids were tombs for Ancient Egyptian pharaohs and queens. They were designed to show how important the ruler was. They took many years to build.

Pyramids developed from mastabas. Mastabas were oblong buildings which were built over underground tombs. The first pyramid was the Step Pyramid. It was built over an older mastaba. Because of this, the Step Pyramid had an oblong base.

Later pyramids were shaped like triangles. They were seen as stairways to heaven. The tops were covered in polished gold, so that they reflected the sun's rays.

Pyramids were filled with things the dead person would need in the Afterlife. Because these things were valuable, tomb robbers often tried to steal them.

The coffin was placed underground, with passages and shafts leading to it. The passages were covered with paintings and hieroglyphs. False passages were added to trick tomb robbers.

1. Where were pharaohs and queen buried before pyramids were developed, and what were they like?

2. What was unusual about the shape of the first pyramid?

3. Why do you think pyramids were triangular?

4. What was put into pyramids, why did this create a problem, and how did they try to solve it?
