

# Museum explorers ancient Egypt



Families  
Ages 6+

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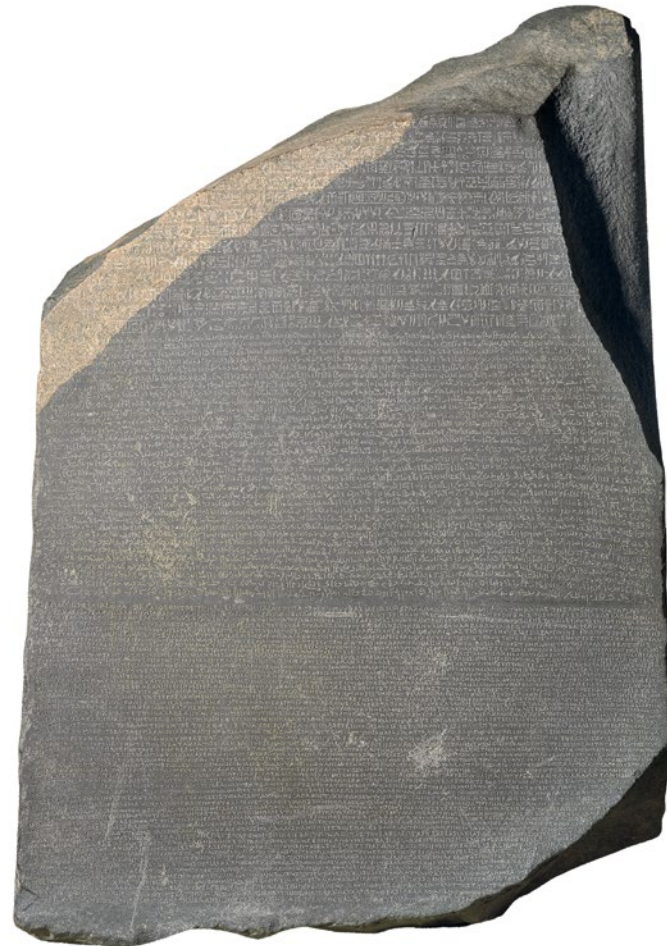
# Welcome

This trail guides you on a journey of exploration and discovery around the Museum. On the way you'll track down some amazing treasures and learn tales of human history. Whichever way you go, and whatever you discover, enjoy yourself! If you ever feel lost, just ask a member of staff for help.

## Useful information for families

- Accessible toilets and baby changing facilities are available. You can breastfeed and bottle feed anywhere on the Museum's grounds but if you would like more privacy, please use the feeding room in the Ford Centre for Young Visitors in The Clore Centre for Education on the Lower floor, Level -1, or one of our baby changing spaces. For details, ask at the Families Desk or Information Desk in the Great Court, or pick up a map of the whole Museum.
- You can leave fold-up pushchairs in the cloakroom free of charge.
- You can find child-friendly food at the cafés. High chairs are available.
- You can use the Ford Centre for Young Visitors to picnic with your family at weekends and during school holidays.

# Museum explorers ancient Egypt



The people of **ancient Egypt** recorded information by carving it into stone. How do you write down your favourite stories and memories?

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This map shows the locations of the objects in this trail. You can pick up a map of the whole Museum at the Information Desk in the Great Court. Please note that some galleries may be closed at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances or refurbishment.

\* The Families Desk is open on weekends and school holidays from 10.00–12.30 and 13.15–16.30

Toilets	Cloakroom	Membership Desk	Café
Accessible toilet	Shop	Families Desk*	Stairs
Baby changing	Information Desk	Guide Desk	Lift
Baby feeding	Ticket Desk	Great Court Restaurant	Level access lift

Take a trip down the Nile to find out why it was so important in ancient Egypt. Discover how ancient Egyptians lived and why they took so many precious things to their graves. You'll need the sharp eyes of an archaeologist to track down every object!

You need to walk up the stairs in the Great Court and over the glass bridge to get to these galleries. You can also use the lifts, located on the map opposite.

Case numbers can be hard to find – don't be afraid to ask a member of staff for help finding an object

- 1

The river of gifts  
Room 65, Upper floor
- 2

Burying the dead  
Room 64, Upper floor
- 3

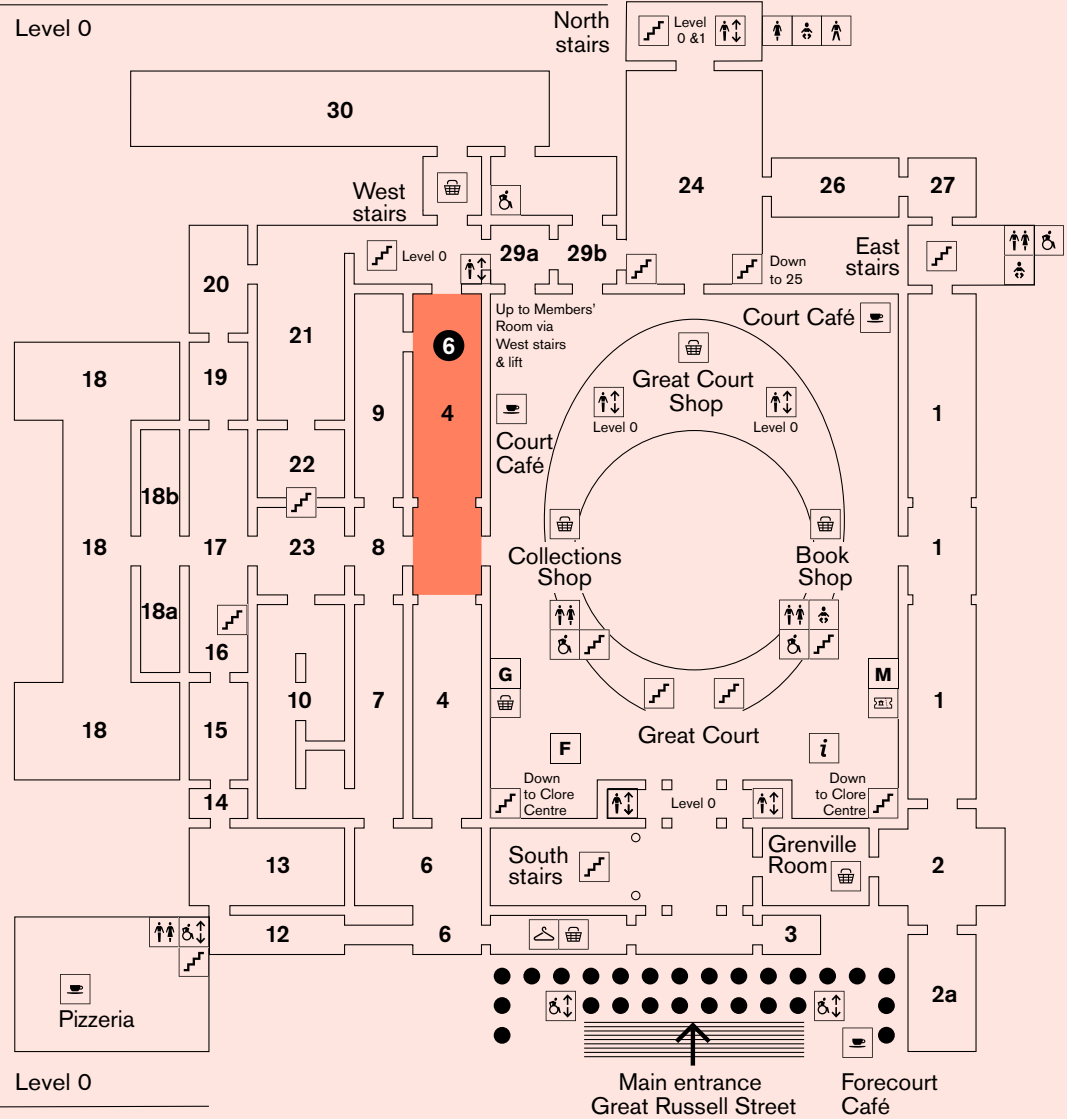
Life after death  
Room 63, Upper floor
- 4

Amazing animals  
Room 62, Upper floor
- 5

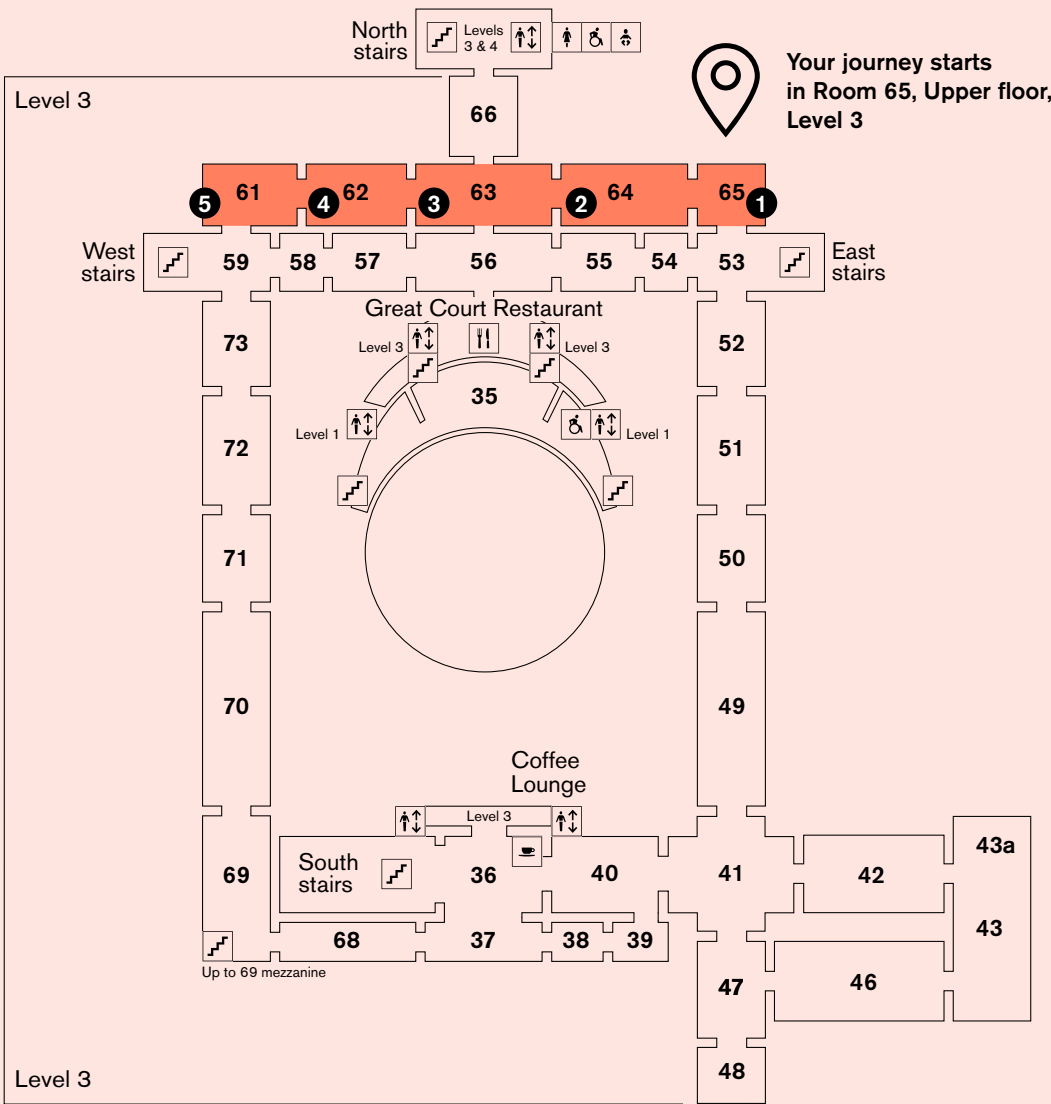
Looking good in ancient Egypt  
Room 61, Upper floor
- 6

Cracking the code  
Room 4, Ground floor

Ground floor



Upper floor



# 1 The river of gifts



From the Great Court you need to walk up the Round Reading Room stairs and over the glass bridge to reach these galleries. Or you can take one of the lifts, which you can find on the map on the first page.

The **River Nile** gave ancient Egypt its power. Like a modern motorway, people used the Nile to transport goods across long distances. Boats loaded with gold, copper and ivory travelled from Nubia to Egypt along the river.



The River Nile's source is on the equator in Africa and it flows nearly 7,000km to its mouth in the Mediterranean Sea

Find this painting of people from Nubia taking presents to the Egyptian pharaoh to keep him happy. Spot these precious gifts:

- ☐ Gold rings
- ☐ A monkey
- ☐ Leopard skins
- ☐ Dark wood

Look at the precious gifts on the other side of this case. What objects can you name?

What's the best gift you've ever received? Why was it your favourite?

## 2 Burying the dead



Go to Room 64 and find the Gebelein man in the case near the centre of the gallery

The **Egyptians** wanted to live forever and believed life continued after death. A proper burial was the best way to guarantee a ticket to the afterlife.



The objects that Egyptians were buried with tell us what lifestyle they were looking forward to in the afterlife.

The Gebelein man died over 5,550 years ago!

What objects were buried with him?

What have you brought with you today?

What does it say about the things you enjoy? If your group could only take four things with them on a journey, what would they be and why?



Find Cases 10 and 11. These objects were discovered in tombs in the city of Abydos.

This was a famous cemetery where the first kings of Egypt were buried. Can you guess what each object is for?

1 A wine jar from the king's vineyard. Only the richest people were lucky enough to drink wine. 2 A flint knife. This could have been used for shaving hair, cutting papyrus or even as a tool for an embalmer (that's someone who prepares and preserves a body after death). 3 A snake-pattern board game. Egyptians loved to play. They used marbles as counters.

Answers:

### 3 Life after death



Go to Room 63 and find Case 5

Ancient Egyptians believed that, if they could reach the afterlife, they would find a perfect version of their life on earth. It wasn't easy to get there though! People buried things in tombs to help the dead make the journey.

**Eyes were painted on coffins so the dead could look out into the world.**

How many eyes can you count around you?



Find items from king Sebekhetepi's tomb and look carefully for:

- ☐ Something to wear on your feet
- ☐ People rowing a sailing boat
- ☐ Something to wrap around yourself

**Look carefully at the models of servants that were placed inside the tombs.**

Ancient Egyptians believed these models served the dead in the afterlife. What sort of food are they making? What food do you wish you could eat forever?



**Sebekhetepi may also be spelt Sobekhotep**



## 4

## Amazing animals

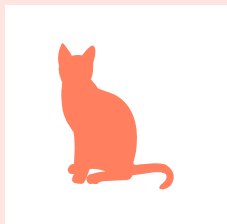


Go to Room 62 and find Case 29

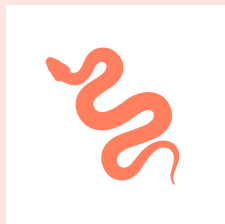
Do you have pets? In Egypt some **animals** were considered sacred. People thought they represented gods or goddesses. Cats were associated with the goddess Bastet, who had a soothing and peaceful nature.

**People left mummified animals at temples as a present for the gods.**

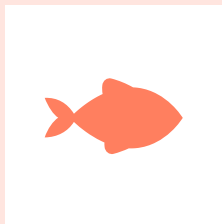
Find a mummy of each of these six animals. What other animals can you spot in this room?



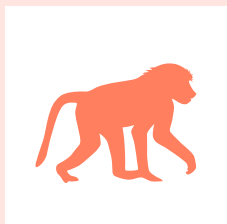
☐ Cat



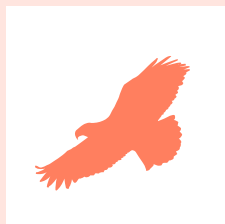
☐ Snake



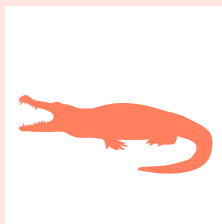
☐ Fish



☐ Baboon



☐ Falcon



☐ Crocodile



Scans have revealed different animals and random collections of bones inside some animal mummies, suggesting they were sometimes fakes

**The Egyptians thought different animals had different qualities.**

What qualities do you think these animals represented? See how many different words you can think of.



## 5 Looking good in ancient Egypt



Go to Room 61 and find Cases 4b and 4c

Women and men wore make-up and jewellery to look their best. Only rich people could afford fancy materials like gold and precious stones. Ordinary people wore copper and coloured pottery beads.

Some of the objects in this case are more than 3,000 years old!  
Can you find:

- ☐ A pair of shoes?
- ☐ Gold bracelets?
- ☐ Precious rings?

What occasion might they have been worn for? Would you wear them today?



Find these brightly coloured vessels. They were made from glass.

Ancient Egyptians used them to store cosmetics and make-up. Which is your favourite? Talk to your group about why you chose it.

Egyptian men and women used black kohl to line their eyes and make their eyelashes darker.

Look around the gallery. Can you see any examples of ancient Egyptians wearing make-up?



## 6 Cracking the code



Take the West stairs or the lift outside Room 59 to go down to Room 4 on the Ground floor, Level 0

The sculptures in this room are covered in ancient Egyptian writing called hieroglyphs. There are more than 700 different hieroglyphs, which various people tried and failed to decipher, until the early 19th century.

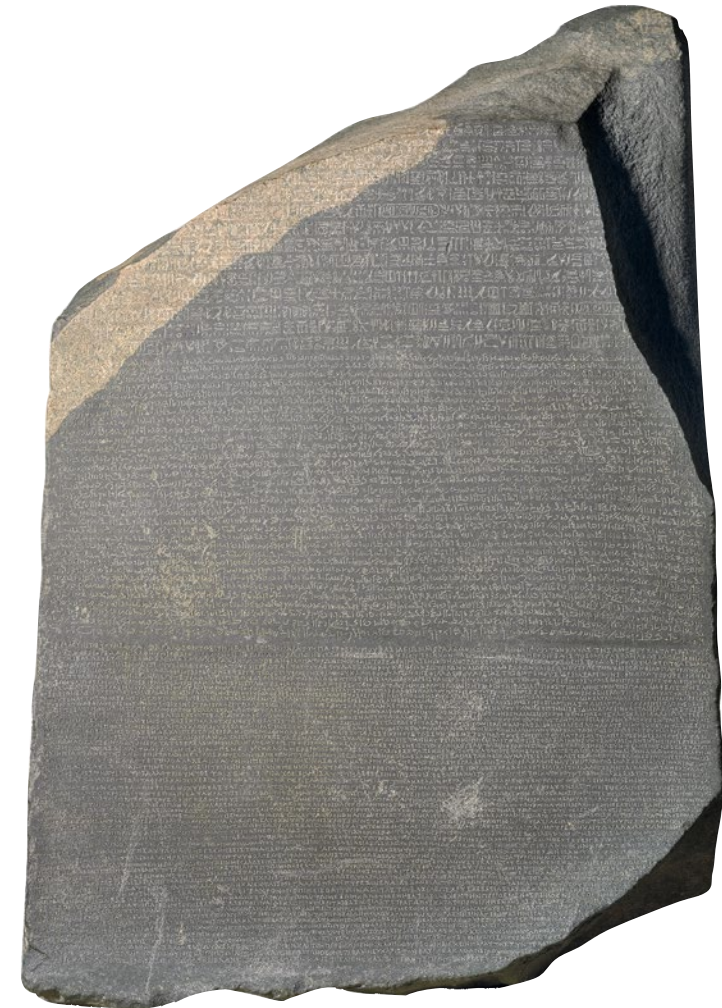


Stand in between the two large columns covered in hieroglyphs.

Can you see any hieroglyphs inside a shape like the one above? This symbol is called a cartouche – it tells you the word inside is a royal name of a king or queen. Start counting cartouches. How many can you spot in 20 seconds?

Find the Rosetta Stone in the middle of the gallery or find a model of the object in Room 1. Look carefully: it has three different types of writing carved into it – hieroglyphs, demotic and ancient Greek.

What similarities and differences can you see between the three forms of writing?



The Rosetta Stone helped people crack the hieroglyph code – it took almost 25 years to decipher the ancient script



# You have completed the ancient Egypt trail!

You can find out even more about life in ancient Egypt around the Museum:

- ❑ Strike a pose like one of the statues in Room 4
- ❑ Look inside a mummy with the virtual autopsy table in Room 64
- ❑ Find out more about the afterlife in Room 61



**Head back to the Families Desk to receive a stamp!**  
What a journey you've been on. You've travelled along the Nile from Nubia to the Mediterranean Sea and explored what life was like in Egypt thousands of years ago. Of all the things you discovered, what was your favourite?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite objects \_\_\_\_\_



# At home

Other things you could do when you get home:

- ❑ Create your own code – share the key with your friends so they can read it too!
- ❑ See how many words you can write using the hieroglyphs below.
- ❑ Draw yourself as an ancient Egyptian king or queen.

a 	b 	d 	f 
g 	h 	i 	j 
k 	l 	m 	n 
p 	q 	r 	s 
t 	u,w 	y 	z 

Complete the picture of the precious gifts for an Egyptian pharaoh (king) with the items you would give him.

## Trails in the Museum explorers series

### Ages 6+

- Africa around the world
- Ancient Britain
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Greeks
- Fantastic creatures
- Journey across Japan

### Ages 3+

- Colour and shape
- Time to count

You can find out more  
about our family activities  
at [britishmuseum.org](https://britishmuseum.org)

**See you at the British  
Museum again soon!**

Cover: The Rosetta Stone, Egypt, Ptolemaic Period, 196 BC.

**1** Tomb painting showing Nubians bringing tribute from the south to the pharaoh, from the Tomb of Sobekhotep. Egypt, about 1400 BC.

**2** Tall ceramic jar of from the Tomb of Den, Egypt, 1st Dynasty.

Complete bifacial knife of brown flint from the Tomb of Semerkhet. Egypt, 1st Dynasty.

A circular game board of pale yellow limestone, Egypt, Early Dynastic.

**3** Rectangular wooden outer-coffin of Sobekhotep from Beni Hasan, Egypt, Middle Kingdom.

Model group, comprising six figures engaged in brewing and butchering, from Beni Hasan, Egypt, Middle Kingdom.

**4** Mummy of a cat, with linen wrappings arranged in a geometric pattern, Egypt, Roman Period.

**5** Polychrome glass vessel in the form of a 'bulti'-fish, Egypt, 18th Dynasty.

Two-handled jar with wide neck, Egypt, 18th Dynasty.

**6** Red granite column with palm-capital from the temple of Herishef, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, about 1250 BC.

The Rosetta Stone, Egypt, Ptolemaic Period, 196 BC.

At home activity: Tomb painting showing Nubians bringing tribute from the south to the pharaoh, from the Tomb of Sobekhotep, Egypt, about 1400 BC.

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