



This image depicts the death mask of King Tut. Beyond its beauty, what does it mean? How was it worn?

Let's start with its composition:

- It is made of solid gold
- It weighs around 24 pounds.

King Tut's mummy—which was wrapped in linen strips—wore the mask over the deceased Pharaoh's head and shoulders.

Does the mask resemble the mummy's features? It actually does:

- Compare the mask to [images of the mummy's face](#) (which were [found in his tomb](#)).
- Compare the face of the [actual mummy to a facial reconstruction](#).

You see similar ears, full lips and a nose which seems to fit with the mask. Maybe it wasn't intended to be an actual portrait, but the mask seems to capture the "boy king."

The headdress (called a *nemes*) has stripes which are made of blue glass. We find the same material in the false beard.

There is a vulture's head on the brow which is made of solid gold (except for the beak and the eyes). Experts tell us that vulture's head symbolizes Tut's sovereignty over [Upper Egypt](#).

Then there's the cobra, next to the vulture, whose body is also made of gold. Experts tell us the cobra symbolizes Tut's sovereignty over *Lower Egypt*.

So ... there is a lot more to know about the mask than just admiring it as an ancient treasure. It was rich in symbolism and meaning for the Pharaoh and the people he ruled.

Credits:

Image of King Tut's mask by Jon Bodsworth and included as part of his Egypt Archive. Mr. Bodsworth has released the copyright for this picture, as follows:

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If you use any of the pictures on the web, the author Jon Bodsworth would appreciate an email: jon@egyptarchive.co.uk

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King Tut's Death Mask and Its Meaning

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