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| **Amenemhat I** |
| Relief of Amenemhat I from his mortuary complex at El-LishtRelief of Amenemhat I from his mortuary complex at El-Lisht |
| [**Pharaoh**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharaoh) |
| [**Reign**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_chronology) | 1991–1962 BC ; (1939–1910 BC) ([Twelfth Dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_dynasty_of_Egypt)) |
| **Predecessor** | [Mentuhotep IV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentuhotep_IV) |
| **Successor** | [Senusret I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senusret_I) |
| [**Royal titulary**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary)

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| [**Prenomen  (Praenomen)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary#Throne_name_(praenomen)) |
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| Sehetepibre*S.htp-jb-Rˁ**Who satisfies the heart of* [*Ra*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra)

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| [**Nomen**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary) |
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| Amenemhat*Jmn m ḥ3.t**Amun is in the front*

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| [**Horus name**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary#Horus_name) |
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| Wehemmesut*Ḥr.[w]-wḥm-mswt**The Horus repeating of births* |
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| [**Nebty name**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary#Nebty_("two_ladies")_name) |
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| Wehemmesut*Wḥm-mswt**He who is repeating of births* |
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| [**Golden Horus**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary#Horus_of_Gold) |
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| Wehemmesut*Bik-nbw-wḥm-mswt**The golden falcon, repeating of births*

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[**Turin canon**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turin_King_List)**:**[...]pib[...]*...p-ib...*

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| **Consort** | [Neferitatjenen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neferitatjenen) |
| **Children** | [Senusret I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senusret_I), [Neferu III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neferu_III), Neferusherit, Kayet |
| **Father** | Senusret |
| **Mother** | Neferet |
| **Burial** | [Pyramid of Amenemhet I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid_of_Amenemhet_I) at [el-Lisht](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El-Lisht) |



Serekh or Horus name of Amenemhat I, detail of a limestone wall-block from Koptos

Cartouche of the birth name, or nomen, of Amenemhat I, detail of a wall-block from Koptos



The ruined pyramid of Amenemhet I at [Lisht](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El-Lisht)

**Amenemhat I** ([Middle Egyptian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_language): [jmn-m-ḥꜣt](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/jmn-m-%E1%B8%A5%EA%9C%A3t); /jaˈmaːnumaˌħuːʀiʔ/) also **Amenemhet I** and the [hellenized](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenized) form **Ammenemes**, was the first ruler of the [Twelfth Dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_dynasty_of_Egypt), the dynasty considered to be the golden-age of the [Middle Kingdom of Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Kingdom_of_Egypt). He ruled from [1991 BC to 1962 BC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_dynasty_of_Egypt)[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-1) (1939 BC to 1910 BC).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-2)

Amenemhat I was probably the same as the vizier named Amenemhat who led an expedition to [Wadi Hammamat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wadi_Hammamat) under his predecessor [Mentuhotep IV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentuhotep_IV), and possibly overthrew him from power.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia%3ACitation_needed)] Scholars differ as to whether Mentuhotep IV was killed by Amenemhat I, but there is no independent evidence to suggest this and there may even have been a period of co-regency between their reigns.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-E._Hornung,_p50-3)

Amenemhet I was not of royal lineage, and the composition of some literary works (the [*Prophecy of Neferti*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophecy_of_Neferti),[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-4) the [*Instructions of Amenemhat*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instructions_of_Amenemhat)[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-M._Lichtheim,_p.135-5)) and, in architecture, the reversion to the [pyramid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid)-style complexes of the [6th dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sixth_dynasty_of_Egypt) rulers are often considered to have been attempts at legitimizing his rule. Amenemhat I moved the capital from [Thebes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes%2C_Egypt) to [Itjtawy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Itjtawy) and was buried in [el-Lisht](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El-Lisht).

**Early reign**

There's some evidence that the early reign of Amenemhat I was beset with political turmoil, as indicated by the inscriptions of Nehri, a local governor.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-6) There were some naval battles where an associate of Amenemhat I by the name of [Khnumhotep I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khnumhotep_I) was involved, and helped to procure victory. Later, Khnumhotep was appointed as an important local governor at [Beni Hasan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beni_Hasan), and he founded a dynasty of local governors there. His grandson was [Khnumhotep III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khnumhotep_III).[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-7)

In the inscriptions by Khnumhotep, mention is also made of military campaigns against the Asiatics and the Nubians.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-8)

**Name**

Amenemhat I's name is associated with one of only two [*sebayt*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sebayt) or ethical "teachings" attributed to Egyptian monarchs, entitled the [*Instructions of Amenemhat*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instructions_of_Amenemhat), though it is generally thought today that it was composed by a scribe at the behest of the king.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-M._Lichtheim,_p.135-5)

Amenemhat I's [Horus name](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_royal_titulary), *Wehemmesu*, which means renaissance or rebirth, is an allusion to the [Old Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Kingdom) period, whose cultural icons and models (such as pyramidal tombs and Old Kingdom artistic motifs) were emulated by the Twelfth Dynasty kings after the end of the [First Intermediate Period](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Intermediate_Period). The cult of the king was also promoted during this period, which witnessed a steady return to a more centralized government.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-9)

**The royal court**

The [vizier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vizier_%28Ancient_Egypt%29) at the beginning of the reign was [Ipi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ipi_%28vizier%29), at the end of the reign, [Intefiqer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intefiqer) was in charge. Two [treasurers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treasurer_%28Ancient_Egypt%29) can be placed under this king: another Ipi and [Rehuerdjersen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehuerdjersen). Two high stewards, [Meketre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meketre) and [Sobeknakht](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sobeknakht), have also been identified.

**His pyramid**

*Main article:* [*Pyramid of Amenemhet I*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid_of_Amenemhet_I)

His pyramid was made in the same fashion as 5th and 6th dynasty pyramids by having a rough core clad with a fine mantle of smooth limestone.

"The core of the pyramid was made up of small rough blocks of limestone with a loose fill of sand, debris and mudbrick. Perhaps the most remarkable feature is that it included fragments of relief-decorated blocks from Old Kingdom monuments – many from pyramid causeways and temples, including Khufu's. Granite blocks from Khafre's complex went into the lining and blocking of Amenemhat I's descending passage. We can only conclude that they were picked up at Saqqara and Giza and brought to Lisht to be incorporated into the pyramid for their spiritual efficacy".[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-10)

When the limestone outer layer was taken, the core slumped. The pyramid and temple have been used as a source of material for lime burners so only a small amount remains today.



Isometric image taken from a 3-D model

The Middle Kingdom pyramids were built closer to the Nile and Amenemhet I's burial chamber is now underwater because the River Nile has shifted course. The complex has an inner wall of limestone and an outer wall of mudbrick; members of the Royal family were buried between these two walls. There are a number of mastaba tombs between the walls and 22 burial shafts on the western side of the pyramid.

His son [Senusret I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senusret_I) followed in his footsteps, building his pyramid – a closer reflection of the 6th dynasty pyramids than that of Amenemhat I – at Lisht as well, but his grandson, Amenemhat II, broke with this tradition.

**Assassination**

Two literary works dating from the end of the reign give a picture about Amenemhat I's death. The [*Instructions of Amenemhat*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instructions_of_Amenemhat) were supposedly counsels that the deceased king gave to his son during a dream. In the passage where he warns Senusret I against too great intimacy with his subjects, he tells the story of his own death as a reinforcement:

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| **“**  | It was after supper, when night had fallen, and I had spent an hour of happiness. I was asleep upon my bed, having become weary, and my heart had begun to follow sleep. When weapons of my counsel were wielded, I had become like a snake of the necropolis. As I came to, I awoke to fighting, and found that it was an attack of the bodyguard. If I had quickly taken weapons in my hand, I would have made the wretches retreat with a charge! But there is none mighty in the night, none who can fight alone; no success will come without a helper. Look, my injury happened while I was without you, when the entourage had not yet heard that I would hand over to you when I had not yet sat with you, that I might make counsels for you; for I did not plan it, I did not foresee it, and my heart had not taken thought of the negligence of servants.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenemhat_I#cite_note-11)  | **”**  |

This passage refers to a conspiracy in which Amenemhat was killed by his own guards, when his son and co-regent Senusret I was leading a campaign in Libya. Another account of the following events is given in the [*Story of Sinuhe*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Story_of_Sinuhe), a famous text of Egyptian literature:

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| **“**  | Year 30, third month of the Inundation season, day 7, the god mounted to his horizon, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Sehetepibre went aloft to heaven and became united with the sun's disk, the limb of the god being merged in him who made him; whilst the Residence was hushed, hearts were in mourning, the Great Gates were closed, the courtiers crouched, head on lap, and the nobles grieved. Now His Majesty had sent an army to the land of the Tjemeh (Libyans), his eldest son as the captain thereof, the goodly god Senusret. He had been sent to smite the foreign countries, and to take prisoner the dwellers in the Tjehnu-land, and now indeed he was returning and had carried off living prisoners of the Tjehnu and all kinds of cattle limitless. And the Companions of the Palace sent to the western side to acquaint the king's son concerning the position that had arisen in the Royal Apartments, and the messengers found him upon the road, they reached him at time of night. Not a moment did he linger, the falcon flew off with his followers, not letting his army know. But the king's children who accompanied him in this army had been sent for and one of them had been summoned. (...)  | **”**  |

**Succession**



The double dated stela CG 20516

Amenemhat I is considered to be the first king of Egypt to have had a [coregency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coregency) with his son, [Senusret I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senusret_I). A double dated stela from [Abydos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abydos%2C_Egypt) and now in the [Cairo Museum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairo_Museum) (CG 20516) is dated to the Year 30 of Amenemhat I and to the Year 10 of Senusret I, which establishes that Senusret was made co-regent in Amenemhat's Year 20.

**Modern adaptation**

[Naguib Mahfouz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naguib_Mahfouz), the [Nobel Prize](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobel_Prize_for_Literature)-winning Egyptian writer, includes Amenemhat I in one of his stories published in 1941 entitled "Awdat Sinuhi". The story appeared in an English translation by [Raymond Stock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_Stock) in 2003 as "The Return of Sinuhe" in the collection of Mahfouz's short stories entitled *Voices from the Other World*. The story is based directly on the "[Story of Sinuhe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Story_of_Sinuhe)", although adding details of a lovers' triangle romance involving Amenemhat I and Sinuhe that does not appear in the original. Mahfouz also includes the pharaoh in his account of Egypt's rulers "Facing the Throne". In this work, the Nobel laureate has the Ancient Egyptian gods judge the country's rulers from Pharaoh [Mena](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menes) to President [Anwar Sadat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anwar_Sadat).