

# Keffiyeh Headdress



## Historical Origin

The keffiyeh is a traditional cotton scarf that originated in ancient Mesopotamia. Farmers and shepherds wore it to protect themselves from the sun and dust. Over time, the keffiyeh became a hallmark headpiece across the Arabian Peninsula and Levant. The red keffiyeh is popular in Jordan, Iraq and the Gulf; the Palestinian version is marked by its distinct black and white pattern.

## Olive Leaves

Represent the cultural and economic significance of olive trees.

## Fishnets

Represent the history of fishing and sailing along the Mediterranean sea.

## Bold Lines

Represent historical trade-routes going through Palestine and the importance of trade and cultural exchange.



## Cultural Significance

The keffiyeh became a symbol of Palestinian identity in the 1930s during the revolt against British military occupation. It was adopted by leaders advocating for liberation and continues to be a cultural relic worn by Palestinians. To dehumanize Palestinians, some portray the keffiyeh as a hate symbol, leading those who wear it to face sharp criticism, hate, or violence in their community spaces. In November 2023, three college students in Vermont were shot in an anti-Palestinian racist attack while speaking Arabic and wearing keffiyehs.

