

Sharks

There are more than 500 different species of shark, including the great white shark, grey reef shark, hammerhead shark, tiger shark, blue shark, bull shark and mako shark. Sharks have five to seven gill slits on the sides of their head.

Where do they live?

Sharks can be found in every ocean in the world. Most sharks don't live in freshwater but some, like the river shark and the bull shark, can live in both freshwater and seawater. Most shark attacks happen in Australia, South Africa, America and Brazil.



Grey Reef Shark



School of Hammerhead Sharks

Big Facts

1. A group of sharks is called a shoal, school or shiver.
2. Sharks do not have any bones in their bodies! They have a skeleton of cartilage instead.
3. One of the smallest sharks is the dwarf lantern shark, which is usually only around 17cm in length.
4. The largest fish in the world is the whale shark, which can measure up to a massive 14 metres long!

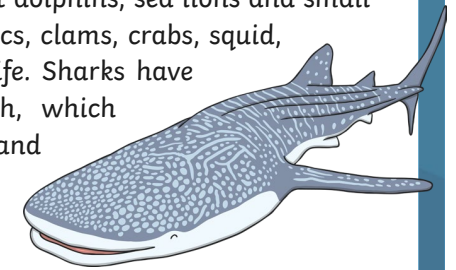
What do they eat?

Some types of shark can be deadly, but only about 12 species have ever been involved in human attacks. Humans are actually very harmful to sharks as they illegally hunt them for their meat,

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organs and skin. This has led to the great white shark becoming an endangered species.

A shark's feeding depends on its species and where it lives. Most sharks are meat eaters so they often like to eat fish and other sharks, and some larger sharks eat dolphins, sea lions and small whales. Smaller sharks eat molluscs, clams, crabs, squid, lobster and other small aquatic life. Sharks have many rows of replacement teeth, which grow on the inside of their jaws and move forward when needed - a bit like a conveyor belt!

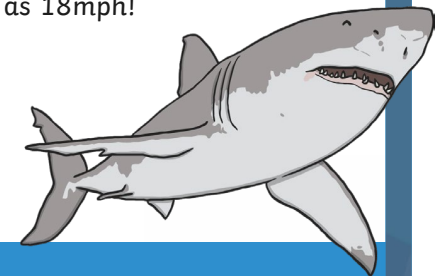


What are they good at?

A shark's sense of smell is so good that they can smell a single drop of blood in the water from 400 metres away. Their hearing is also amazing because they can hear fish moving from around 500 metres away! A baby shark is called a pup. Pups are born already able to take care of themselves. They have to swim away fast as some mothers try to eat their own pups and their own siblings can even attack them! Great white sharks can swim as fast as 18mph!

Amazing Fact!

Most shark species would die if they stopped moving. As long as they keep swimming, water keeps moving over their gills, which keeps them alive.



Questions about Sharks

1. How many different types of shark are there?

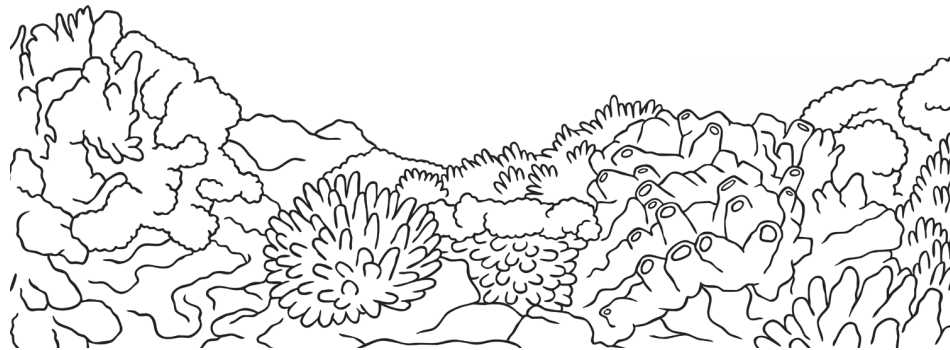
2. Name six species of shark.

3. How small is the smallest shark?

4. Which countries have had the most shark attacks?

5. Do all species of shark attack humans?

6. Why have some humans hunted sharks and what has this led to?



7. What is special about sharks' teeth?

8. Describe how good a shark's smell and hearing are.

9. What are baby sharks able to do straight away and why?

