TIME FOR KIDS

Mammal Mania



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What Is a Mammal?

They come in many shapes and sizes. They may swim in oceans or run through deserts and fields. Some climb trees or cliffs. They live in rainforests, frozen places, and even in your home. What are they? Mammals!



jaguar



orca (killer whale)

There is at least one mammal living in your home. You! Humans are mammals.

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Smart!

Mammals have the biggest and smartest brains of all animals. People often choose mammals for pets because they can be trained. If you have a dog, a cat, or a guinea pig, you have a pet mammal.



A rabbit's body stays 102°F at all times. ➤

Mammals are warm-blooded animals. They are called **vertebrates** (VUR-tuh-breyts) because they have backbones.

Being warm-blooded means that a mammal's body stays the same **temperature** at all times. In order to do this, a mammal must eat lots of food. It also has hair, fur, or a layer of fat to keep it warm. Sometimes it has more than one of these. A polar bear has both thick fur and fat because it is always cold where it lives.

Did you know that being in water cools your body? You get cold if you stay in too long. Since water mammals spend their lives in the water, they have a layer of fat to **insulate** (IN-suh-leyt) their bodies. It holds in their warmth.



Food = Energy

Mammals eat a lot of food in order to make energy. The energy keeps them warm.

▲ Fat and fur keep seals warm by protecting them from the cold, just as a thick coat helps you stay warm.

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humpback whale

Some mammals, like whales, live in the sea. Others live on land. Land mammals have four **limbs**. No matter where they live, all mammals breathe with lungs.

Limbs

A land mammal's limbs are its legs and arms.



sea otter



dolphins

All water mammals must come to the surface to breathe.