

Shark Species

Junior Shark Keeper Worksheet



There are thought to be over **450 different species** of shark, with new species being discovered all the time.

Sharks have lived through five mass extinctions; **they're older than trees!**

Modern sharks began to appear about **100 million years ago**, but the very earliest fossilised evidence of sharks dates back over 400 million years.



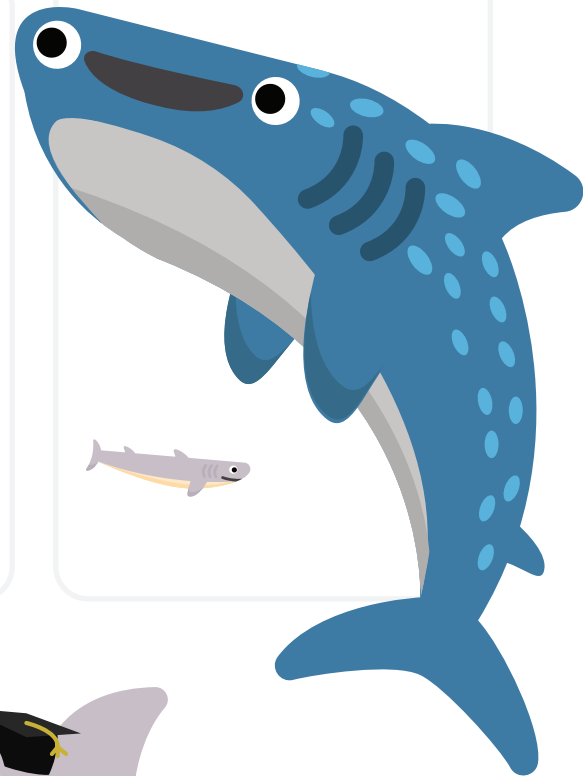
Until the 16th century, **sharks were known to mariners as "sea dogs"**, and although the origin of the word Shark is uncertain, it is most likely to have derived from the Dutch word Schurk, meaning "villain or scoundrel".

Did you know that Australia is the home of sharks? **There are 182, of the 400 different species of shark, that call Australian waters home**, including the great white, tiger, bull and oceanic whitetip!



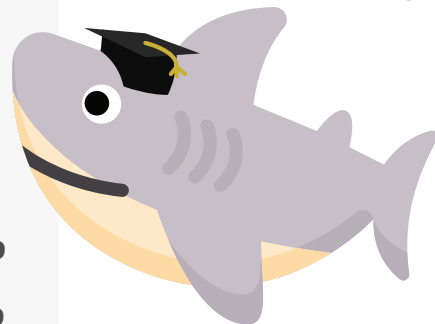
The smallest shark is the dwarf lantern at just six inches and the largest is the whale shark, **the largest fish in the sea at a whopping 12 metres in length.**

Sharks have some of the thickest skin in the world. **Whale sharks are said to have skin that's 15cm thick!**



Take a guess YES or NO

1. Are sharks bigger than buses? **Yes | No**
2. Have you ever eaten a shark? **Yes | No**
3. Can a shark swim faster than 100km an hour? **Yes | No**
4. Female sharks can reproduce by themselves. **Yes | No**



1. NO | Not any that are alive today. But the extinct Megalodon shark was the largest species of shark that ever lived, and was thought to have grown up to 25 metres in length!
2. MAYBE | Shark or "lemonfish" is commonly served at takeaway shops, so if you've ordered fish and chips, you may have eaten a shark!
3. NO | Not quite. The shortfin mako is the fastest shark and has been clocked at speeds of 68km an hour. The sailfin is the fastest fish in the sea and can swim at over 100 km an hour for short bursts
4. YES | Shark species including bonnethead, blacktip, and zebra sharks have the power of parthenogenesis - the ability to have young without a male shark through fertilising their own eggs.

