



# Animal Teeth

## Part 1

**Teacher Reads** What animals eat, their diet, may include plants or meat or both. Animals can be sorted into categories (groups), depending on their diet: herbivores (plant eaters), carnivores (meat eaters), and omnivores (meat and plant eaters). The teeth of different animals have changed over time in ways that help them eat their food.

Take a look at an animal's teeth. The teeth can help  
11 you tell what sort of food the animal eats. If an animal eats  
24 just plants and no meat, it is called an **herbivore**.

34 Horses, camels, sheep, and moose are all  
41 herbivores.

42 Herbivores have wide, flat back teeth. Those  
49 back teeth help herbivores crush and eat grass,  
57 leaves, seeds, and other sorts of plants.

64 Some herbivores have front teeth with sharp  
71 tips. Those teeth help them chomp through  
78 branches, twigs, and hard seeds. A beaver has sharp  
87 front teeth for cutting down trees. A beaver will  
96 eat the soft layer under the bark on tree trunks and  
107 branches.

108 Herbivores eat lots of plants. A moose eats so  
117 many plants that its teeth get worn down. The teeth  
127 do not grow back. For some herbivores, such as  
136 beavers and sloths, a different thing happens. The  
144 front teeth have no roots, so the teeth do not stop  
155 growing like people's teeth do. As the teeth get worn  
165 down, they will keep growing back for the rest of the  
176 animal's life.



## Part 2

**Teacher Reads** Meat eaters, or carnivores, need sharp teeth to capture prey, the animals they hunt and eat. Read on to learn about carnivores.

178        Animals that eat just meat are called carnivores. Snakes,  
187 seals, and some whales are carnivores.

193        A carnivore's teeth are unlike an herbivore's teeth.  
201 A carnivore has long, sharp front teeth that are like blades.  
212 With teeth like this, a carnivore can stab and rip up what  
224 it eats. A carnivore's back teeth are sharp, too. It can use its  
237 back teeth as cutting tools. It can slash meat into chunks.

248        Some snakes have long, sharp, hollow teeth. Those teeth  
257 are called fangs. When a snake bites into an animal, it shoots  
269 **poison** through its fangs. The poison stuns or kills the  
279 animal before the snake eats it.

## Part 3

**Teacher Reads** The prefix *omni-* means "all." It's part of the word *omnivore*. Omnivores eat both plants and meat. Keep reading to find out how teeth help omnivores eat their food.

285        There are animals that eat all sorts of food—plants and  
296 meat. They will eat whatever they can get. These animals  
306 are called omnivores. Chimps, pigs, and raccoons are all  
315 **omnivores**. People are omnivores, too.

320        An omnivore has a mix of sharp teeth and flat teeth.  
331 The sharp teeth help omnivores rip and cut meat. The flat  
342 teeth help them crush food.

347        A panda is an omnivore. It will sometimes eat fish or little  
359 animals. But its main food is bamboo. A panda uses its wide,  
371 flat teeth to crush and eat bamboo shoots, leaves, and stems.

382        Looking at an animal's teeth can tell you a lot. The teeth  
394 will help you see if the animal is an herbivore, a carnivore,  
406 or an omnivore. [Learn More](#)

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