

DO YOU KNOW SHARKS AS WELL AS YOU THINK?

1. THINK YOUR FAMILY IS BIG?

There are over 400 species of sharks

2. SHE'S JUST BIG-BONED

The largest shark is the whale shark reaching up to 65 feet long. For perspective, the average school bus is 35 feet long!¹

3. GLOW BABY GLOW

The smallest shark is the dwarf lanternshark which reaches only 8 inches long — slightly longer than a pencil.²

4. MOVE OVER USAIN BOLT

The shortfin mako is the fastest shark, reaching speeds of up to 30 mph.

5. NO CASTS NEEDED

Sharks do not have bones. Instead they have skeletons made of hard cartilage like the bridge of your nose.

6. TRY NOT TO CUDDLE

Sharks have scales that are tooth-like in shape, with the pointed end facing the tail. This means that if you rubbed a shark from head to tail it would feel smooth, but if you rubbed from tail to head it would be rough like sandpaper.

7. FIVE SENSES? TRY SIX!

In addition to taste, sight, sound and smell, sharks also can sense electric fields and pressure waves in the water, making them especially good at locating and capturing prey.

8. WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

Most sharks live in saltwater, but there are some species that can survive in fresh water like the bull shark, which has been found over 1,000 miles up the Mississippi river.

9. LAZYBONES

Many sharks need to swim in order to push oxygenated water over their gills to breath, but there are some species that are capable of sitting on the bottom and not moving for long periods of time.

10. FILL 'ER UP

Sharks have livers that are full of oil, which helps them stay afloat rather than sink.

Now that you've learned all about how cool and unique all these different shark species are, it's now time to take action to help save them before it's too late. Right now, sharks are in trouble. The fins from 73 million sharks end up in the global trade every year and it is jeopardizing shark populations worldwide. But there's something we can do to help – Congress should pass the Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act to ban the buying and selling of shark fins in the United States.

1 <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/fish/discover/sharks/basics/>

2 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/12/no-2-pencil_n_3908502.html