



ELEPHANTS

KEY INFORMATION



Elephants originate from Africa and Asia. They live in 37 different countries including Southern, Eastern, Western and central Africa. They spend their time living in the savannah, wetlands, grasslands, forests and deserts. They are the world's largest land mammal, weighing up to 6 tonnes. African elephants live up to 70 years old, however Asian elephants only live to 48 years.

Elephants live in herds, with usually the oldest female leading the herd. They are very cooperative and move together, making decisions as a group for the safety of each other and to find the necessary resources for survival. Sadly, elephants are on the endangered list of species, many are killed by humans for their ivory tusks.

APPEARANCE

Elephants are greyish to brown in colour that have distinguishing features. They have a long trunk that can lift more than 700 pounds and has up to 40,000 muscles. The trunk is also used to drink by sucking up water and squirting it into the mouth.

Elephants have tusks that are used for a variety of purposes, such as digging, lifting objects, gathering food, stripping bark from trees to eat and for defence. They also have large ears to help them stay cool, they will flap them around to lose body heat. Elephants have thick skin, with folds and wrinkles to hold up to 10 times more water, which also helps them to cool down.

DIET

Elephants are herbivores, they eat roots, grasses, fruits and bark. They use their powerful trunks to dig for roots and break off large tree branches.

An adult elephant may feed for up to 16 hours and can consume up to 300 pounds of food in a single day. These hungry animals do not sleep much, and roam great distances while looking for large quantities of food to eat to keep their bodies going and gain the necessary nutrients.

FUN FACTS

They keep their skin clean and protect themselves from sunburn by taking regular dust and mud baths. Baby elephants are called calves and they can stand within 20 minutes after being born.

Elephants communicate in different ways. They can sound like a trumpet call, or they can create vibrations in the ground which they may detect through their bones. They can also communicate through body language, touch and scent.



Find Out More...

https://ielc.libguides.com/sdzg/factsheets/african_elephant/characteristics

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/learn/fascinating-facts/elephants>

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/what-s-the-difference-between-asian-and-african-elephants-and-10-other-elephant-facts>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/african-elephant>

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

- 1) Where do elephants originate from?
- 2) What is a group of elephants called?
- 3) Name one way an elephant uses its trunk.
- 4) How much food can an elephant consume?
- 5) How do elephants keep their skin clean?