

# Whales



**W**hales are very clever large, aquatic mammals. They breathe air just like humans, but through an opening called a blowhole. They are the only mammals that have adapted completely to life in the ocean. Like all mammals, whales have some hair and are warm-blooded. They feed their babies milk and have four-chambered hearts.

There are two types of whales: toothed whales and baleen whales.

## Toothed Whales

Species of toothed whales include the beluga, narwhal, pilot, killer, and sperm whales. Dolphins are also a species of toothed whales. Toothed whales have one blowhole and use echolocation to hunt. They have sharp, peg-like teeth to catch fish, squid, and other marine mammals, which they swallow whole.



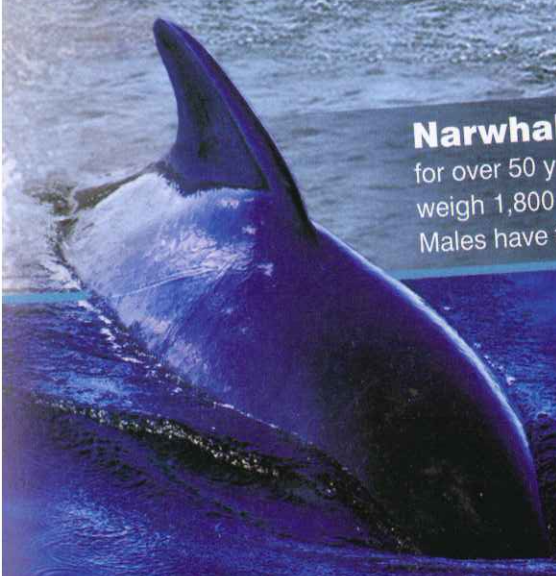
**Beluga Whale:** Also called white whales, belugas live in shallow waters near the Arctic. Adults are up to 18 feet long, weigh 2,600 to 4,200 lbs and live for up to 80 years. Calves are born five feet long at 180 lbs, and are gray, but lose their color by around age seven.



**Killer Whale:** Also known as orcas, killer whales are one of the world's fiercest predators. They live throughout the world's oceans and range from 16 to 26 feet long and weigh three to six tons. Calves are born eight feet long at 400 lbs. The maximum lifespan of a male is 60; for a female, 90.

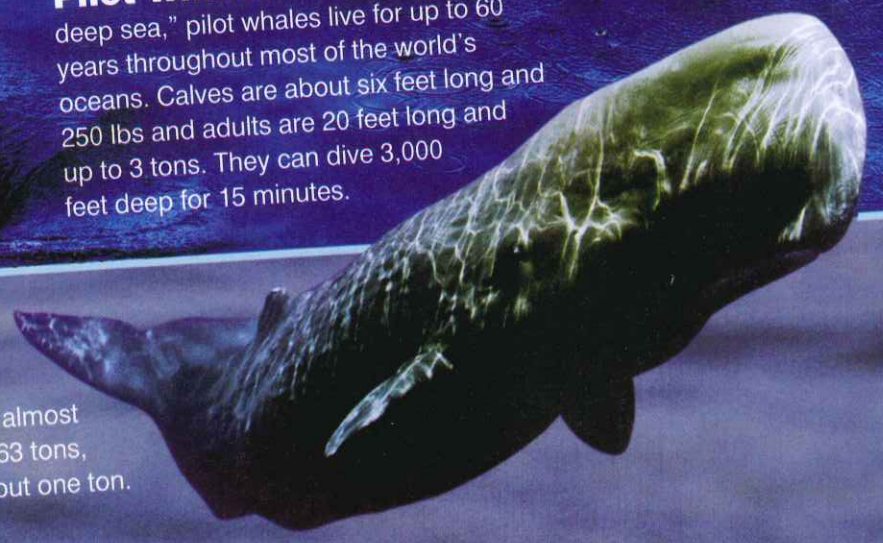


**Narwhal:** Nicknamed the "unicorns of the sea," narwhals live for over 50 years in the Arctic. Adults are 11 to 14 feet long and weigh 1,800 to 3,500 lbs. Newborns are five feet long and 220 lbs. Males have tusks which can be over 10 feet long.



**Pilot Whale:** Called "cheetahs of the deep sea," pilot whales live for up to 60 years throughout most of the world's oceans. Calves are about six feet long and 250 lbs and adults are 20 feet long and up to 3 tons. They can dive 3,000 feet deep for 15 minutes.

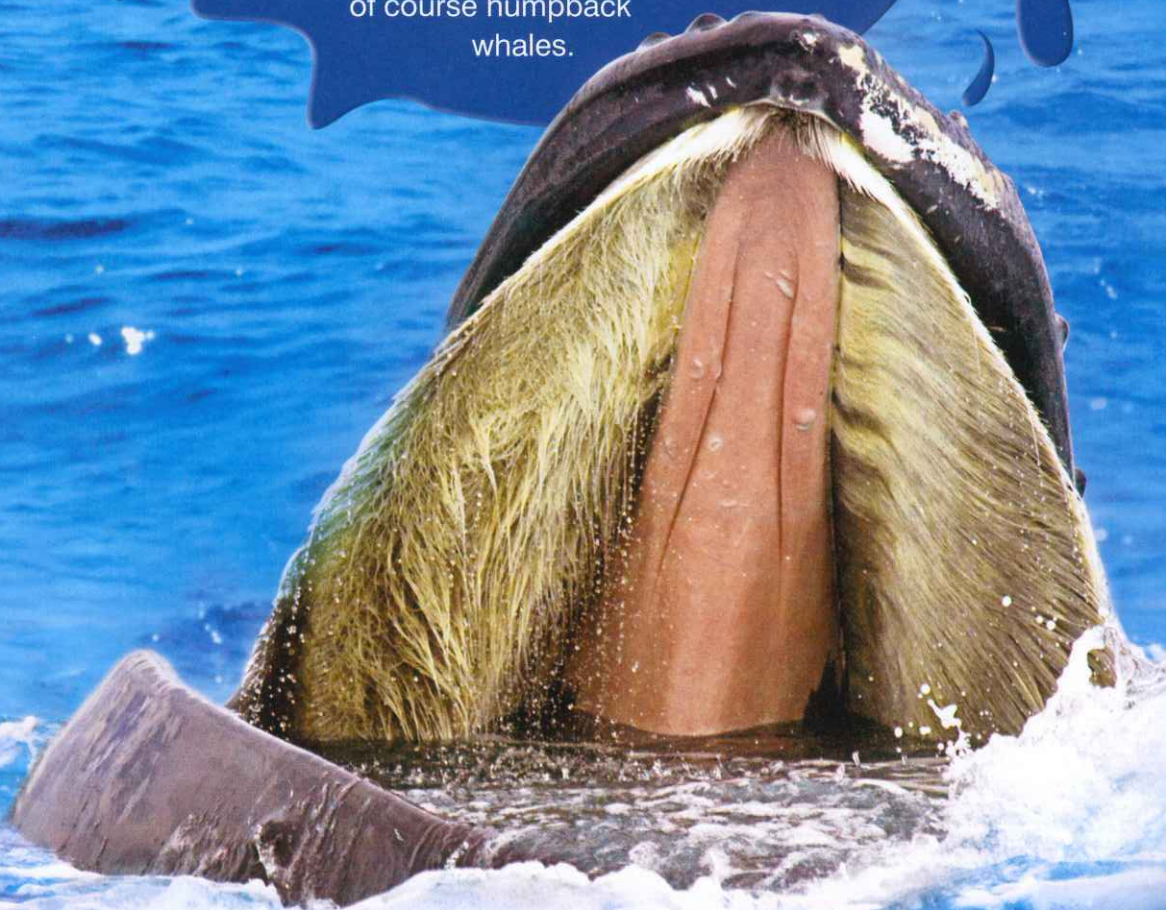
**Sperm Whale:** Sperm whales are the largest of the toothed whales, and the deepest diving mammals. They live up to 70 years throughout the world's oceans and can dive to almost 10,000 feet. Adults are 67 feet long and weigh 63 tons, while newborns are 13 feet long and weigh about one ton.




# Baleen Whales

Baleen whales are larger than toothed whales and have two blowholes. Also called toothless whales, they have plates attached to baleen hairs in their mouths in place of teeth. Sometimes called whalebone, baleen is a very strong material made of keratin, the same material human fingernails are made of. Baleen whales take in large amounts of water as they swim. The baleen plates have a comb-like structure, which filters out food, like krill and fish, from the water. Unlike toothed whales, and most other species of animals, female baleen whales are larger than males.


Species of baleen whales include the blue, fin, minke, gray, bowhead, right, and of course humpback whales.




Baleen was once used in many things such as corsets, buggy whips, and umbrella ribs.




**Blue Whale:** The largest animals ever to have lived, blue whales can be over 100 feet long and weigh 200 tons. Calves weigh three tons, and drink 110 gallons of milk and gain 200 lbs every day. Blue whales live up to 80 years throughout the world's oceans. The blue whale is an endangered species.




**Fin Whale:** Fin whales live throughout the world's oceans. At 82 tons and almost 90 feet long, it is the second largest animal in the world and can live up to 90 years. Calves are born 20 feet long weighing two to three tons. Fin whales are endangered.



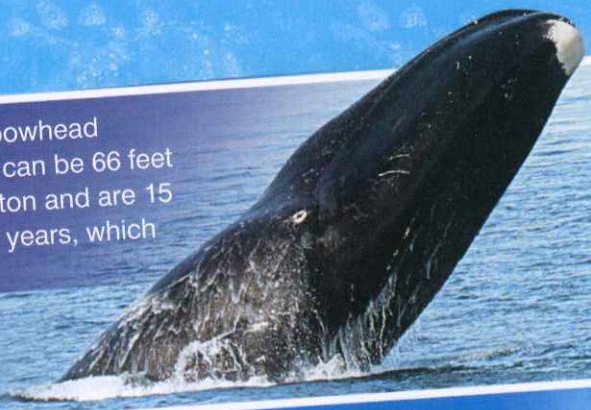
**Minke Whale:** The minke whale can live for 50 years and is the smallest baleen whale, at 35 feet long and 11 tons. At birth, calves are 9 feet long at 1,000 lbs. They live everywhere from tropical to arctic waters, and are known to be curious, sometimes swimming alongside ships.



**Gray Whale:** Gray whales live for up to 70 years in the North Pacific. They can be up to 49 feet long and weigh 40 tons. Calves are about 13 feet long and weigh 1,500 lbs. They blow air from their blowholes in the shape of a V.



**Bowhead Whale:** The second heaviest whales, bowhead whales live in the Arctic and do not have dorsal fins. They can be 66 feet long and weigh 110 tons. Newborn calves weigh about a ton and are 15 feet long. Scientists believe that they can live for over 200 years, which make them by far the longest living mammals on Earth.



**Right Whale:** Right whales can be 59 feet long and weigh 100 tons, and can live for at least 70 years. Calves are up to 20 feet long and weigh one ton at birth. They are a critically endangered species, with very small remaining Atlantic and Pacific populations due to whaling.