

# 20 Amazing Shark Facts!

1. The **FASTEST** shark is the Shortfin Mako Shark – which can swim at speeds of up to 50km/hr for short distances. They can do this by raising their body temperature above that of the surrounding water. This helps their muscles react quickly.



Great White Shark Tooth.

Look carefully for the serrated edges, which help it bite and tear its food.

2. The **LARGEST** shark is the Whale Shark. Reaching lengths of up to 18m. They can dive to more than 700m and their mouth can be 1.5m wide!

3. The **RAREST** shark species is the Megamouth Shark. Only 43 specimens have ever been sighted and 3 recorded on film. It was only discovered in 1976.

4. The **SMALLEST** shark is the Dwarf Lantern Shark. These sharks live in deep water and only grow to 16-19cm. They are bio-luminescent – meaning they can glow in the dark!

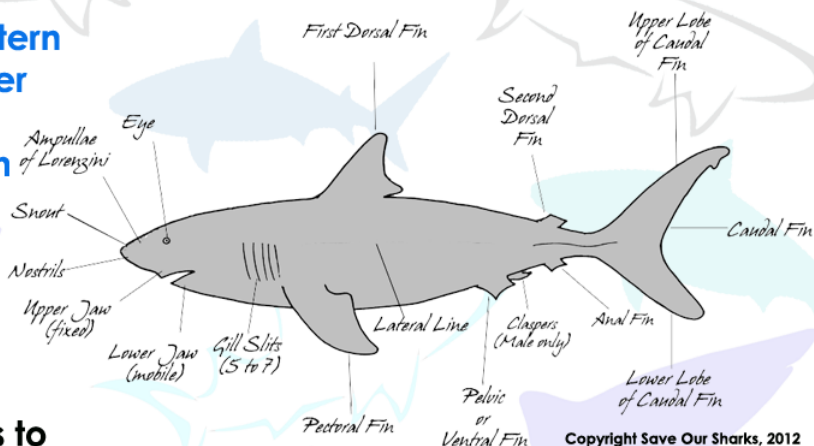
5. Sharks can't swim backwards. Their body is designed only for forwards movement. Some sharks, like the Epaulette shark use their pectoral fins to 'walk' along the bottom and may be able to move backwards when 'walking' like this, but a sharks tail can only propel them forwards through the water.

6. Scientists can work out the **AGE** of a shark by counting the growth rings that form on its vertebrae. This requires a very high powered microscope.

7. Sharks do not care for their young. When a shark has hatched, or is born, it is completely independent and relies on its instincts to hunt for food, so it's mother doesn't have to look after it at all.

8. Sharks **SKIN** is made up of tiny tooth-like structures called 'denticles'. These are tough and protective and help the shark swim faster by stream lining water flow over their body.

9. Shark meat is often found in fish shops sold as 'flake', 'huss' or 'rock eel'. It usually contains high levels of heavy metals, or toxins that have accumulated in the food it eats and the water it lives in – so it's not a good choice when buying seafood.



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10. Some sharks can have up to 3000 teeth at any one time. Others however, have no teeth at all and eat krill by filtering it out of the water.