

# MEET THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

## ABOUT ME

Hippos are the **third largest mammal on Earth**, they have a large barrel-shaped body, short legs, a short tail and an enormous head! Hippos can grow to about **1.5m** tall, and weigh up to **4000kg**.

Hippos spend most of their day in rivers and lakes. Their eyes, nose and ears are on the top of their head, which means they can see and breathe whilst submerged in the water.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Despite a hippo's enormous size, they are great swimmers and can hold their breath for up to five minutes underwater. When completely submerged, their ears and nostrils fold shut to keep water out.

## How long can you hold your breath for?

Hippos live in Africa, where the sun's UV rays are incredibly strong. They have adapted an ability to produce a red, oily liquid which acts as a natural sunblock.

## INTERESTING FACT

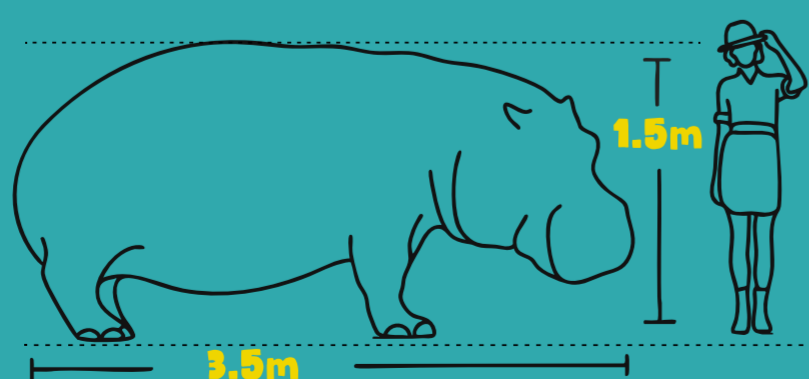
Hippos can actually identify a friend from foe by smelling their dung.

Hippos use middens, or outdoor areas where they repeatedly go to the bathroom. Hippos can then sniff the area to find out who's been there, and if they're considered a friend.

## MY NAMES

My name, 'Hippopotamus', comes from the Greek word "**hippos**" meaning horse.

## Do you know the meaning of your name?



## MY FAMILY

A male hippo is called a **bull**. The female hippo is called a **cow**, and the baby is called a **calf**.

Hippos usually live in groups (or "herds") of around 10 to 20 individuals, led by one large dominant male. The other members are females, their young and a few young non-breeding males.

In the wild hippos live for around 40 years. In captivity, they tend to live longer and may reach up to 50 years old.

## How big is your family?

## WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT

A hippo's enormous size lends itself to creating **micro-habitats** for smaller organisms. They help habitats for fish populations by repeatedly walking on common pathways from water sources to inland areas.

## OUR BIGGEST THREAT

Hippos are classified as "**threatened**" due to human activity impacting their environment.

## WHAT WE LIKE TO EAT

Hippos are **herbivores**, which means that they eat plants! They eat, on average, **37 Kilograms** of grass each night.

An adult Hippo drinks about **200 Litres** of water per day.

## How much water do you drink everyday?

## BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Hippos can run up to speeds of 48 Kilometers per hour! But only for very short distances.

## How fast can you run?