

## What does it look like?

A sea turtle looks like a floating tortoise, but there are some differences. A sea turtle is much bigger than a tortoise, and varies between species but is anywhere between 2 - 6 ft long. Its shell is hard and patterned. Instead of legs it has 4 flippers that it uses to swim through the water. It is not easy for the turtle to walk on land and it has to scoop out the sand to move forwards. Turtles are mostly green, dark grey, black or brown and are patterned.

## What do turtles eat?

Turtles eat seagrass, algae and seaweed. They are herbivores. When they are babies they are omnivores.

## Fact File - The Sea Turtle



## Where does it live?

Sea turtles live in many areas of open water and coastal zones. They are more common in the Indian Ocean, Eastern Pacific and around coral islands. They like warmer water. When they are ready to breed (lay eggs) they come to shore and bury them in the sand.

## Why is it endangered?

Worldwide there are 7 species of turtles and 5 of them are endangered or critically endangered. Over the last 200 years, humans have killed turtles for eggs, meat, skin, and shells.

Another reason why they are endangered is due to habitat destruction. Beaches have been developed to be used for tourism and this then disrupts the turtles from laying their eggs.

They are also accidentally captured in fishing gear and this means that they are unable to come to the surface to breathe and they drown.

Sea turtles also swallow plastic bags which collect in their stomachs and eventually kill the turtles.

Finally climate change alters the temperature of the sand and this means more females are born than males.