

A large hammerhead shark is the central focus, swimming towards the left. Its mouth is slightly open, revealing rows of sharp teeth. The shark's body is a mix of grey and white, with a prominent dorsal fin. The background is a deep blue ocean filled with a dense school of smaller, silvery fish. The overall scene is dynamic and captures the natural behavior of these apex predators.

# Super Sharks

 **beanstack originals**



# Super Sharks

Get ready to meet some of the coolest sharks in the sea!



Sharks are amazing creatures. They come in many sizes. They can be found all over the world. And they are very important to our ocean. Ready to learn more? Dive in!

## All About Sharks

When you think of fish, do you think of a giant creature with razor-sharp teeth? It may be surprising, but a shark is a type of fish! Like other fish, sharks have special body parts called gills. They use these gills to breathe underwater, sort of like how humans use lungs to breathe in air. Sharks also have fins and tails. These body parts help fish move in the water. Fins and tails let fish steer, balance, and more.

### FUN FACT

**Some sharks can use their fins to “walk” along the ocean floor.**

Sharks are also different from other fish. Fish are vertebrates, meaning that they have skeletons and backbones. For most fish, these skeletons are made of bone—like yours is. However, a shark’s skeleton is made of something called cartilage. Cartilage is more flexible than bone. This lets sharks twist and turn. It is also lighter than bone, which helps sharks swim quickly.

Sharks use their amazing swimming skills to hunt for other animals, called prey. Different sharks eat different things, such as other fish, seals, turtles, and more. (One thing they don’t eat? Humans!)



## Super Sharks



Once a shark catches its prey, it uses its many sharp teeth to eat it. Sharks don't have just one row of teeth, like humans do—they have many! When one tooth falls out, another is waiting to replace it.



*A large great white shark swims just under the surface of the ocean.*

### Great White Sharks

Quick, think of a type of shark! Did you think of the great white? These are some of the most famous sharks in the world. Part of that is because of how huge they are! Great white sharks are usually about 15 feet long (4.6 m)—that's about as long as a giraffe is tall. Some can even grow longer than 20 feet (6.1 m)! And they can weigh more than 5,000 pounds (2,268 kg)—almost as much as a small Asian elephant. These powerful sharks live in most ocean waters around the world, where they feed on animals like seals and sea lions. Great whites are excellent hunters, but don't worry—they don't hunt humans!

### Hammerhead Sharks

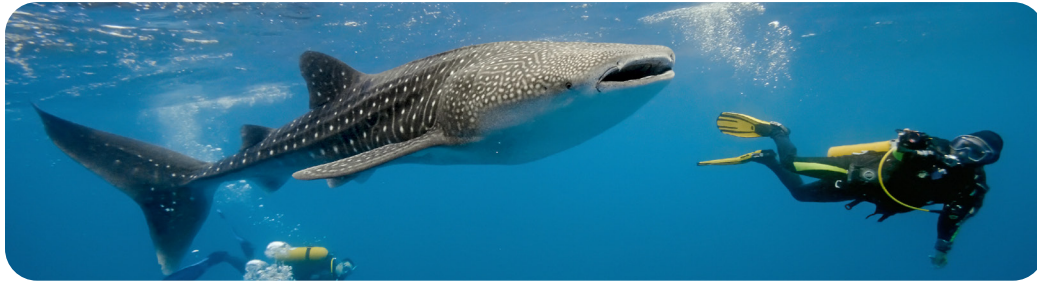
What has a head shaped like a hammer? A hammerhead shark, of course! Hammerhead sharks come in different sizes, from 13 to 20 feet (4 to 6.1 m) in length—that's about two to three adult humans lined up end to end. Like great white sharks, hammerheads can be found in oceans around the world. There, they feed on other sea creatures, such as lobsters, fish, crabs, and their favorite: stingrays. A hammerhead's unique head helps it hunt these meals. Because the shark's eyes are set at opposite ends of its head, it can see all around it. Hammerheads also have special body parts on their heads.



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These body parts can scan the waters to find prey using electrical energy!



Two divers swim with a massive spotted whale shark.

### Whale Sharks

If you thought great whites were huge, wait until you meet the whale shark. Despite their name, these sharks are not whales—they are still fish. But they can reach sizes almost as big as some whales! These enormous fish grow from 18 to 32.8 feet (5.5 to 10 m). That is as long as a short school bus! They can also weigh more than 20 tons—that is as much as three large African elephants. However, even though they are huge, these sharks aren't hunters. Whale sharks feed by swimming with their mouths open. When they do, they swallow small fish and other tiny ocean organisms called plankton. These gentle giants can be found in warm, tropical seas.

### Saving Sharks

Thanks to scary movies, some people are afraid of sharks. But sharks usually aren't dangerous. Sharks do not hunt humans, and shark attacks are very, very rare.

In fact, sharks are actually helpful to humans! This is because sharks are important to the ocean around us. Sharks help keep certain fish populations under control. This keeps the ocean healthy.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

**Sharks have lived on Earth for about 450 million years. That's before trees first appeared on land!**



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However, sharks face danger from humans. Some people hunt for sharks. Others accidentally catch them when they are fishing. Because of this, many shark populations are endangered. This means that these populations are in danger of going extinct. When an animal is extinct, there are no more of that animal left alive on the planet. Luckily, many people and organizations are working to protect sharks! This will help not only the sharks, but also the whole ocean—and humans, too.