

Shark Vs Dolphin Comparison Table

Criteria	Shark	Dolphin
Taxonomy	Belongs to the class Chondrichthyes (cartilaginous fish)	Belongs to the order Cetacea (mammal)
Evolutionary History	Approximately 450 million years of evolutionary history	Returned to the water around 50 million years ago
Skeleton	Cartilaginous (made of cartilage)	Bony (made of bones)
Body Shape	Streamlined, often with pectoral fins not fused to the head	Fusiform (torpedo-shaped), pectoral fins fused to the head
Reproduction	Oviparous (lay eggs outside the body)	Viviparous (give birth to live young after gestation)
Parental Care	Limited or no parental care after birth	Exhibits strong parental care; mothers nurse and protect their calves
Respiratory System	Gills for extracting oxygen from water	Blowholes on the tops of their heads for breathing air
Breathing	Extract oxygen continuously from water; some species need to swim to facilitate respiration	Conscious breathers; must come to the surface periodically to breathe
Social Behavior	Often solitary hunters with limited complex social behaviours	Highly social, often forming pods with intricate communication and cooperative hunting strategies
Communication	Primarily through body language, visual cues, and sometimes electroreception	Utilizes vocalizations, clicks, and whistles for communication, displaying a sophisticated echolocation system
Intelligence	Generally considered less intelligent, more instinct-driven	Renowned for high intelligence, problem-solving skills, and capacity for learning
Tool Use	Rare instances of tool use	Some species exhibit tool use, such as using sponges for protection
Teeth	Continuously replaced throughout life, with multiple rows waiting to replace lost or damaged teeth	Set number of teeth, not continuously replaced
Feeding Style	“Bite and spit” feeding style, relying on powerful jaws and sharp teeth	Grasps prey with teeth but generally swallows prey whole, employing more sophisticated hunting techniques
Habitats	Inhabit a wide range of oceanic environments, from coastal areas to deep-sea habitats	Found in both oceanic and coastal regions, with some species also residing in freshwater environments
Temperature Preferences	Broad range of temperature tolerances, from cold to warm waters	Generally prefer warmer waters; some species inhabit tropical and subtropical regions