



Here at NG Kids we're *turtally* mad about turtles, that's why we've put together these ten terrific turtle facts!

These magnificent creatures come in all shapes and sizes and live in a number of different environments. They all belong to a group of **reptiles** called **Testudines**, which includes **turtles**, **tortoises**, and **terrapins**.

From giant, slow-moving land-dwelling tortoises and snappy terrapins basking in their fresh-water lagoons, to the graceful strokes of a sea turtle gliding through our oceans - check out our ten totally awesome turtle facts, below!

Turtle facts





1. Turtles belong to one of the oldest reptile groups in the world - beating snakes, crocodiles and alligators!
2. These creatures date back to the time of the dinosaurs, over 200 million years ago - woah!
3. Turtles are easily recognised by their bony, cartilaginous **shell**. This super-tough casing acts like a shield to protect them from predators - some turtles can even tuck their head up inside their shell for extra protection!



4. Just like your bones, a turtle's shell is actually part of its skeleton. It's made up of over **50 bones** which include the turtle's **rib cage** and **spine**.

5. Contrary to popular belief, a turtle cannot come out of its shell. The turtle's shell grows with them, so it's impossible for them to grow too big for it!

6. What a turtle eats depends on the environment it lives in. Land-dwelling turtles will munch on **beetles**, **fruit** and **grass**, whereas sea dwellers will gobble everything from **algae** to **squid** and **jellyfish**.



7. Some turtles are **carnivores** (meat eaters), others are **herbivores** (plant eaters) and some are **omnivores** (a mixture of the two!). Many baby turtles start life as carnivores but grow to eat more plants as they mature.

8. Turtles are '**amniotes**' - they breathe air and lay their eggs on land, although many species live in or around water.

9. These cold-blooded creatures have an incredibly long life span. The oldest ever recorded, named **Tu'i Malila**, of Tonga Island, passed away at the grand old age of **188**!



10. Sadly, many species of turtle are endangered! **129** of approximately 300 species of turtle and tortoise on Earth today are either vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered, according to the **IUCN**. Threats include loss of habitat, poaching and the illegal pet trade.