

# Primary Worksheets: Hedgehog

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The hedgehog is a wild animal but is a friendly spiky mammal that can be found all over the world. They are well known for the spikes they have on their backs.

It got its name because of its weird scavenging habits. They snuffle through hedges in search of their favourite food of small creatures. The hog part of their name came from the pig-like grunts it makes when it is on its quest looking for food.

They are nocturnal creatures, spending most of the day sleeping in a nest or under bushes. They like to live in moist places either in the over-ground or underground. They like to find holes or abandoned tunnels to sleep in. You can find them in woodland areas, farmlands, gardens or parks!



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Hedgehogs like to live in areas where there are lots of insects on the ground and where other food can be found so they can easily snap it up.

They can travel up to 2.5 miles searching for food at night, but they tend to have a home range of about 100 meters. Hedgehogs can't really see well, so they rely on their hearing and smell to lead them to where they need to go.

They are loved by gardeners as they get all the pesky insects that ruin their plants. Farmers will leave food out to attract hedgehogs as they are a great help to them! That is why they tend not travel far for food.



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Not all hedgehogs hibernate! European hedgehogs hibernate throughout the winter, but the ones that live in deserts sleep through the heat and drought.

Before a hedgehog goes into hibernation, they will eat a lot of food in the autumn. Then they will build their nest of leaves and grass and go off for a long sleep!

To keep themselves warm they will roll themselves up into a ball and use their nest to keep them warm. While hibernating, they will come out on sunny days to eat and drink water. Lots die during hibernation because their body temperature drops to a low level.



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Hedgehogs are carnivores. They like to eat to insects, worms, centipedes, snails, mice, frogs, and even snakes! They are immune to most snake venom. They are able to take down a viper in a fight and eat it too!

Their coats are thick and spiny which protects them against predators like the fox. If they are frightened, they will curl up into a ball to protect their stomach, face, legs and belly which do not have spines on them.

Each hedgehog has between 5,000 to 7,000 spines on their bodies. After every year, their spines will drop off and new spines will grow. Hedgehogs are often compared to pincushions!



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Answer the questions.

What is a hedgehog?

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Why are they special?

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What do they look like?

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Answer the questions.

What do they eat?

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What happens if they are frightened?

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What do they do before hibernation?

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