

Vertebrates and Invertebrates

Animals are living creatures that inhabit the earth. Animals grow, make more of their kind, and can move by themselves. They also need food, air, and water to live, and they respond to changes in their environment. Animals can be further divided into two groups: Vertebrates and Invertebrates.

A frog is a **vertebrate**.



Birds, frogs, horses are vertebrates.

An earthworm is an **invertebrate**.



Snails, insects, and jellyfish are invertebrates.

What is the difference between a Vertebrate and an Invertebrate?

- A **vertebrate** is an animal that has a backbone. Vertebrates have a skeleton made up of bones inside of their body that gives them a rigid shape. This skeleton also helps them to move around more easily. Vertebrates are usually larger animals, including birds, fish, amphibians (such as frogs), reptiles (such as snakes and lizards), and mammals (such as dogs and people).
- An **invertebrate** is an animal that does not have a backbone. Invertebrates do not have an internal skeleton, so many of them have a soft body. Other Invertebrates have a hard covering known as an exoskeleton that supports and protects the animal. Invertebrates are usually small, move slowly, and include animals such as sponges, jellyfish, various types of worms, mollusks (such as snails and squids), and starfish. Most of the animals on our planet are invertebrates.

Think of living creatures that live around your home. Are there vertebrates that live in or around your home? Have you noticed any invertebrates in your backyard? Explore your surroundings and see if you can find any vertebrates and invertebrates where you live.