

# Let's Learn About Frogs



## **Vocabulary:**

amphibian  
cold-blooded  
vertebrates  
invertebrates  
metamorphosis  
gill  
capillary  
tadpole  
frog spawn

## **Frogs are amphibians**

Frogs are a type of animal called an amphibian. Amphibians live both on water and on land. Unlike humans, amphibians are cold-blooded animals. You may have heard the words cold-blooded but you may not know what that means. Warm blooded animals have a constant body temperature. A normal temperature for a human is around 98.6° F. A frog, on the other hand, does not keep a constant temperature but instead its temperature changes to whatever the temperature is in its environment. Frogs are vertebrates. A vertebrate is an animal that has a back-bone. Animals that do not have a back bone, like worms, are called invertebrates.

## **Frogs breathe on land and in water**

Frogs can survive on land and in water. You may wonder how frogs can breathe under water and on land. When frogs are on land they breathe much like humans by taking in air through their mouth and breathing it into their lungs but when they are in water they take in oxygen through their skin. Frogs skin has tiny capillaries (very small blood vessels) that absorb oxygen from the air and transport it into the frog's body.

### **What do frogs eat**

Frogs eat small animals like insects and worms. They don't hunt for food though. They have really big eyes on the top of their head. Their eyes are so big they can see all the way around. They don't hunt for food but instead they wait for their food to come to them. They sit still and when a bug or insect wanders by they snag them with their long sticky tongue.

### **Life cycle of a frog**

**Egg:** Frogs begin their lives as eggs. The female frog normally lays a mass of eggs, called a frog spawn, in or near water. There are thousands of eggs in this mass. The spawn is covered with a sticky jelly-like substance that helps protect the frog spawn and helps it to stick to nearby vegetation. The frog egg starts off as a single cell. This egg splits into two cells and continues to divide into more and more cells. The egg continues to divide into lots of cells that form an embryo. Inside the egg the frog is developing organs and gills. After about three weeks the egg hatches and becomes a tadpole. (The egg can hatch anywhere from 2-25 days depending on the water temp and the type of frog)

**Tadpole:** A tadpole is a baby frog. It doesn't really look like a frog though. It sort of looks like a fish with a body and long tail. The tadpole attaches itself to surrounding vegetation and feeds on small plants called algae. Tadpoles have gills to help them breathe under water. As the tadpole gets a little older he will start to swim around the water with his tail.

**Tadpole with legs:** When a baby frog is about 7-10 weeks old he will sprout legs. He will eventually look more like a frog but his transformation is not complete yet. He looks like a little tadpole with legs.

**Froglet:** About 2-3 weeks after the baby frog gets his legs, his arms will sprout. He looks more like a frog but he still has a tail. The froglet will continue to live in water until his metamorphosis is complete. As the froglet grows his tail will get shorter and will eventually be reabsorbed by his body.

**Frog:** Once the frog is mature, his gills will be replaced with lungs, he will no longer have a tail, and he will be able to breathe out of water. He will leave the water and live his life mostly on land. As adult frogs they will find a mate. The female frog will go back to the place where she was born, lay her eggs, and the frog life cycle begins again.