

Deadliest Sharks

Great white shark

- Length up to 20 ft (6 m)
- Weight up to 4,400 lb (2,000 kgs)

Largest of the predatory sharks, the great white has 300 sawlike teeth. Its jutting upper jaw helps it grab chunks of meat off its prey. It's responsible for most shark attacks on humans.



Hammerhead shark

- Length up to 20 ft (6 m)
- Weight up to 1,000 lb (450 kgs)

The widely spaced eyes and nostrils of a hammerhead shark help it pinpoint its prey's exact location. If a hammerhead wants you, it will find you!



Tiger shark

- Length up to 15 ft (4.25 m)
- Weight up to 1,400 lb (635 kgs)

This shark has sharp teeth and powerful jaws that can chomp through a sea turtle's shell. It will eat anything from seals and dolphins to floating junk such as tin cans.



Bull shark

- Length up to 11.5 ft (3.4 m)
- Weight up to 500 lb (230 kgs)

A bull shark uses its body weight to attack by bumping its prey first and then going in for the big bite! It can swim far up into rivers and even enter lakes.





Divers who dive for sport or to study and film underwater life often come face to face with dangerous sharks. Some carry spear guns, or bangsticks that fire a small explosive charge that can kill a shark. But for those who want to study sharks, killing them is not the answer.

A bangstick is more effective than a spear gun against a large shark.



Valerie and Ron Taylor developed a new idea. These Australian filmmakers are well known for their underwater photography. But it is dangerous work. Valerie has the shark bites to prove it!



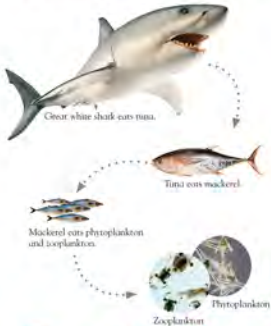
On one dive trip, the Taylors noticed a crew member wearing some stainless steel mesh gloves to protect his hands while cleaning fish. This gave them an idea. Why not make a whole dive suit out of chain mail to protect divers from sharks—like the chain mail suits worn by knights?

They made a suit out of 400,000 tiny stainless steel rings. But to test the suit, someone had to wear it in the water. Someone had to make the sharks bite!



Why We Need Sharks

Sharks are important because they are at the top of the oceanic food chain. They keep ocean life healthy and balanced.



As the top predator, sharks control the population of fish lower in the food chain.



Sharks mostly prey on old, sick and weak fish, so the fitter fish live on to pass their healthy qualities to their babies.



Sharks hunt smaller fish that might otherwise eat too much phytoplankton. Phytoplankton are ocean plants which produce oxygen that is needed for ocean life to flourish.

The survival of ocean creatures and their habitats depends on the shark population of the region.

