

SAVE OUR SEAS



DOLPHIN BODY PARTS

Blowhole

My blowhole is on my head between my eyes and dorsal fin. It's a small opening letting air in so I can survive under water. I can hold my breath for up to eight minutes at a time – and much longer if I really have to.

Belly

My fine-looking, trim belly is on my underside.

Beak

My beak is another word for snout or nose.

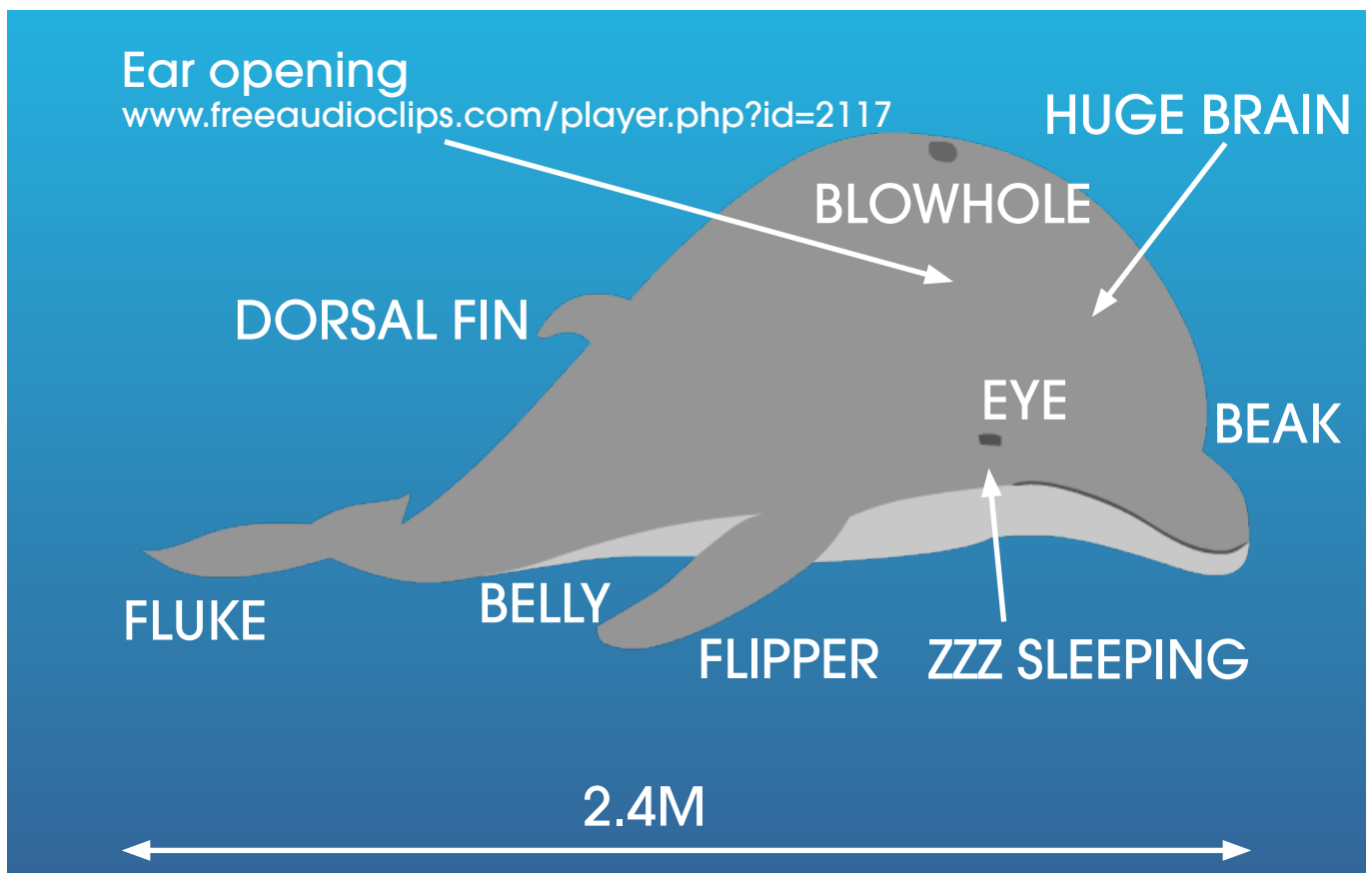
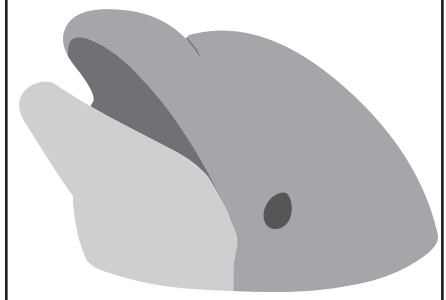
Dorsal Fin

My dorsal fin is located on the top along my back. It's made of fibrous tissue; it's not bone or muscle – it's more like the cartilage in your knee joint.

Duffy says,

"We're human's best friends! If a diver is injured under water, you'll hear stories of dolphins gently raising them to the surface so they can breathe. We do the same with our sick and injured friends.

"We've also been known to see off Great White Sharks if they have threatened swimmers.





DOLPHIN BODY PARTS

Eyes

Have you noticed that when you swim in the sea your eyes sting a bit from the salt? My eyes have a jelly like cover them that protect them from salt and sand in the water.

Flipper

My flippers are a bit like your hands and I use them for steering through the water.

Ear openings

I can hear underwater.

I can also do something humans can't do without machines and computers: I can use sound (sonar – also called echo-location) to 'see' things in the dark of the sea. We send out high frequency sound that bounces off objects in the water so we can tell where they are and what they are without using our eyes. We also use sonar to 'talk' to each other over long distances.

Fins

My fins are made of bone covered with cartilage. This helps steer me through the water.

Fluke

My fluke is the paddle on the end of my tail. It's shaped a bit like the wing on an aircraft. It's what makes me such a fast swimmer.

I can swim to depths of 30m. My cousin, the Rossi dolphin, can dive to 1000 metres!

Teeth

My teeth are very sharp and pointed. I have over 200 teeth.

Brain

It's true – I am very intelligent! We are fast learners and can even learn sign language to communicate with humans.

Sleeping

I don't sleep like you do for eight hours a night. If I tried, I'd drown! I'm a mammal and I breathe air just like you.

Instead I doze near the surface with only my blowhole showing. I doze for a few minutes at a time, resting one side of my brain for a short time then swapping over.



DOLPHIN BODY PARTS

Jumping

I like playing with my friends. One of our games is to see who can jump the highest. See us playing here. (PLAY http://www.oceanfootage.com/video_clips/HJ03_031 6 seconds)

Jumping is also one of the ways we communicate or 'talk'; we can see further across the sea and keep an eye open for danger; jumping also shakes off any parasites – yeuch!

Zoos

I don't like those places. I'm used to travelling hundreds of kilometres so being cooped up in a swimming pool is not nice. Luckily, in Britain, you don't keep dolphins in zoos or aquariums.

Size

The largest bottlenose dolphins, like me, live in Scotland. We can grow up to 4 metres in length and weigh as much as 600 kilos.

My cousins who live in warmer seas near the Equator grow up to 2 metres and weigh 150 kilos.