

Orangutans

(*Pongo pygmaeus*)



Kingdom: *Animalia*

Phylum: *Chordata*

Class: *Mammalia*

Order: *Primates*

Family: *Hominidae*

HAIR

They are mostly covered with long reddish-brown hair.

HEAD

The orangutan has a large head with a prominent mouth area. Adult males have large cheek flaps (which get larger as the ape ages).

SENSES

Orangutans have senses very similar to ours, including hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch.

HANDS and FEET

Orangutan hands are very much like ours; they have four long fingers plus an opposable thumb. Their feet have four long toes plus an opposable big toe. Orangutans can grasp things with both their hands and their feet. The largest males have an arm span of about 7.5 feet

SIZE

Orangutans are about 2/3 the size of the gorilla.

Orangutans	Height	Weight
Female	2.6-3.5 ft	110 lb
Male	3.2-4.5 ft	200 lb

DIET

Orangutans are omnivores (they eat both plants and animals) but are mostly herbivorous (plants comprise most of their diet). They eat fruit (their favorite food), leaves, seeds, tree bark, plant bulbs, tender plant shoots, and flowers. They also eat insects and small animals (like birds and small mammals).

Orangutans don't even have to leave their tree branches to drink; they drink water that has collected in the holes between tree branches.

INTELLIGENCE AND LANGUAGE

Orangutans are very intelligent. They have been known to use found objects as tools; for example, they use leaves as umbrellas to keep the rain from getting them wet. They also use leaves as cups to help them drink water.

BEHAVIOR and SOCIAL HABITS

Orangutans are shy, solitary animals that are active during the day (they are diurnal). They live alone in large territories. This is probably due to their eating habits; they need a large area in order to get enough food and too many orangutans in one area might lead to starvation.

The only long-lasting orangutan social group is the mother and offspring, who live together for about 7 years. When mating, the male and female orangutans stay together for only a few days.

LOCOMOTION

Orangutans usually move by swinging from one branch to another; this is called brachiating. Orangutans can also walk using their legs (but rarely do). Orangutans do not swim.