

## Facts About Badgers – Skimming and Scanning Task

Badgers are one of the most popular and well-known British mammals. There are 11 species of badger, which are commonly found in Northern America and most of Europe as far as Southern Scandinavia. The honey badger is found in most parts of sub-Saharan Africa, including the Arabian Desert. Badger species found on the British Isles have been there for at least 250,000 years but some scientists say they could have been around for as long as 400,000 years.

In the United Kingdom, badgers are protected by a law which makes it illegal to hurt, trap or kill them. They do not like to be touched and it is highly likely that you would get bitten or attacked if they feel threatened.

Badgers are part of the same family as otters, ferret, polecats, weasels and wolverines. They have an elongated head with small ears and a black and white face. Their body has greyish fur, with black and white areas underneath. A badger can grow to nearly a metre long and will weigh between 9 and 11 kilograms. They can run very quickly but only for a short time. They are also good climbers and swimmers!

A male badger is called a boar, a female is called a sow and the babies are called cubs. They can live to be 15 years old. A group of badgers is called a cete although they are often called clans. There are usually 2 – 15 badgers in a cete. Badgers typically give birth during January, February or March. They can have between 1 and 5 cubs each time. The birth usually takes place in the underground chambers, where the cubs will remain until they are about 8 weeks old.

Badgers have chunky bodies with short legs that are suitable for digging. They have five toes on each foot and very long, powerful claws, which makes them the fastest-digging animal on Earth! They live in a complex underground burrow called a sett that they dig themselves. Setts have a number of rooms for different things, such as sleeping and giving birth; they are all connected with tunnels that lead up to the outside world. Badgers use leaves and grass to make beds in their setts. The biggest sett on record was 35 metres long with 12 different entrances. Some setts have been used for more than 100 years by many generations of badgers!

Badgers live in families of around 6 and are very house proud. They keep their setts very clean and tidy and do not eat or go to the toilet inside. They build separate toilets above ground, far away from their setts. They build their setts close to a scratching tree which they use to keep their claws sharp.

Badgers are nocturnal mammals, which means they sleep during the day and are awake at night. During the day they stay underground in their setts, where they might sleep and groom each other. At night they go out to look for food and spend a lot of time clearing out, gathering fresh bedding, playing together and digging.

Badgers are omnivores which means they eat both meat and plants. Their diet is made up mainly of earthworms but they also like beetles, slugs, wasps, frogs and mice. They also enjoy fruit, such as elder berries or blackberries, and bluebells. They have excellent hearing and a very powerful sense of smell which helps them to find food. They can eat several hundred earthworms each night!

Badgers have played a predominant part in English Literature and have featured in lots of British books over the years, such as Brian Jacques' Redwall series, "Tommy Brock" in Beatrix Potter's The Tale of Mr. Tod, "Bill Badger" in Mary Tourtel's Rupert Bear, "Mr. Badger" in Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows and "Trufflehunter" in C. S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia.

### Skimming and Scanning Challenge

1. The word 'badgers' appears 13 times. Underline them all in red.
2. The word 'are' appears 16 times. Underline them all in blue.
3. The word 'they' appears 27 times. Underline them all in green.
4. The word 'have' appears 11 times. Underline them all in purple.
5. Circle the word 'badger' in red. How many are there? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Circle the word 'which' in blue. How many are there? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Circle the word 'but' in green. How many are there? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Circle the word 'setts' in purple. How many are there? \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the correct answer to complete each sentence. Use skimming and scanning techniques to find the evidence in the text.

9. Badgers are part of the same family as otters, ferrets, polecats, weasels and...

rabbits.	wolverines.	stoats.	owls.
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10. Badgers use leaves and grass to make beds in their...

burrows.	nests.	setts.	hives.
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11. The biggest sett on record was 35 metres long with 12 different...

tunnels.	windows.	doors.	entrances.
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12. During the day they stay underground in their setts, where they might sleep and...

groom each other.	eat earthworms.	play with the cubs.	dig tunnels.
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13. Badgers are omnivores which means they eat...

meat.	plants.	both meat and plants.	pizza and chips.
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14. Badger species found on the British Isles have been there for at least...

500,000 years.	250,000 years.	300,000 years.	450,000 years.
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**Badgers** live in families of around 6 and are very house proud. They keep their **setts** very clean and tidy and do not eat or go to the toilet inside. They build separate toilets above ground, far away from their **setts**. They build their **setts** close to a scratching tree which they use to keep their claws sharp.

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Circle the correct answer to complete each sentence. Use skimming and scanning techniques to find the evidence in the text.

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