

Words

adult = a grown-up person

apart = separate; not together

area = place

barrier = something that keeps people away from other things

behavior = the way you act

biome = an area that has a certain climate and where certain animals and plants live ; ecosystem

breed = to bring animals together so that they can have babies

cage = a structure made of wires or steel in which animals are kept

capture = to catch

create = make

encounter = meet, come across

environment = the world around us

excitement = the feeling of being excited about something

exhibit = here: cage where animals are kept

extinct = die out

feed = to give an animal something to eat

fence = a structure made of wood or metal that is around a piece of land

grassland = large area covered with wild grass

group together = put together

however = but

mammal = a kind of animal that drinks milk from its mother when it is young

miss = lose, not have

path = way, route

pit = a big hole in the ground where animals are kept sometimes

process = procedure, job

reptile = an animal whose body temperature changes according to the temperature around it ; it usually lays eggs to have babies

research = to do work in order to find out more about something

scarce = rare, not enough of something

selection = choice, variety

separate = different

sick = ill

survive = to stay alive and continue to exist

thrilling = exciting, gripping

touch = to put your hand or finger on someone or something

wildlife = animals and plants that grow in nature

A zoo is a place where you keep and show animals. **Adults** and children all over the world like visiting zoos. Almost every large city in the world and lots of smaller towns have zoos. They have gardens and **paths** that lead from one area to another. Modern zoos have gift shops, restaurants and buildings where you can learn about animals and nature. Some zoos have special areas where visitors can **feed** or even **touch** animals.



Every zoo keeps a different **selection** of animals. Many large zoos keep **mammals**, birds, **reptiles** and fish from all over the world in **separate areas**. Zoos have many functions. Visitors can have fun and get information. Zoos also help to save **wildlife**. Some of the world's animals are in danger of becoming **extinct** and zoos give them a place to **survive**. You can see animals that you may never see in your life any more. Zoos give children tours and teach classes to understand the lives of animals in a better way. Studying animals is called zoology and people who do **research** on animals are called zoologists. They take care of **sick** animals and try to learn more about them and their bodies.

SHOWING ANIMALS

The first zoos kept their animals in separate **cages** or in areas with **fences** or walls around them. Most of them, **however**, did not like living alone. They **missed** the **excitement** and **thrilling** life that they had in nature.

Today, zoos try to **create** an **environment** that is more natural to the animals and the visitors who watch them. It looks more like real nature with rocks, plants and trees that animals would normally **encounter**. Instead of being kept in **cages**, many zoos have large areas where animals can move around freely and do the things that they would also do in the wild.

Many zoos put animals of the same kind into the same areas. For example, lions, tigers and other large cats may be kept together in some **exhibits**. Animals that live in the same climate or **biome**, for example **grasslands** or deserts, may also be **grouped** together.

In most cases, visitors can observe the animals but not **touch** them. Some **exhibits** use glass plates, others keep visitors and animals **apart** through rivers, **pits** or other natural **barriers**.

HOW ZOOS GET ANIMALS

The first zoos usually bought animals that were **captured** in the wild. But as wild animals started becoming **scarcer** many zoos have started to **breed** as many animals as possible. Sometimes they also borrow them from other zoos.

Breeding is a very difficult **process**. Zoos first have to study the **behavior** of animals in order to **breed** them successfully. After this is done they often lend or sell these animals to other zoos. Every year thousands of animals, like snow leopards, penguins or monkeys are exchanged.

admission = you have to pay in order to get into a place like a stadium or a zoo
Age of Exploration = time when Columbus and other explorers set out to discover the New World and other continents - 15th and 16th centuries
ancient = old
announce = to say officially
bamboo = a tall tropical plant, the stems of which are hollow
cage = a structure made of wires or steel in which animals are kept
curator = someone who is in charge of a museum or a zoo
date back = go back to a certain year
donation = money that you give a person or organization in order to help them
emperor = the king of a group of countries
employee = a person who works for someone else
feed - fed = to give an animal something to eat
found-founded = to start something
fulltime = for all the hours of a week
government = the people who rule a country
grain = the seeds of a crop like corn or wheat, which are used to make food
grant = money that you get from someone to use for something special
handle = treat
huge = very big
in addition = also
in case = if
keeper = someone who looks after animals
local = here: city or state
medical care = to look after an animal and see to it that it does not get ill
menagerie = a group of wild animals kept privately or for the public to see
navigator = explorer who sailed on a ship and discovered new lands
needs = what you need in order to live and survive
non-profit organization = organization that does not make money
receive = get
replace = put back
ruler = the person who is the head of a country
security personnel = people who see that nothing dangerous happens
staff = the people who work in a company or in a place
stand by = to be ready for
supervise = oversee, control
supplement = something that you add to make better
tame = to train a wild animal not to attack you
vet - veterinarian = a person who is trained to give medical help to an animal

CARING FOR ANIMALS

Keepers are trained workers who care for the everyday **needs** of animals. They feed them and clean their **cages** as well as the area that they live in. Food is prepared in special kitchens. More kinds of food are served in zoos than in most restaurants. They need a lot of money to buy meat, **grain**, fruit and vegetables.

Zoos often **announce** special feeding times of animals so that visitors can watch. These animals are **fed** at the same time every day. For many animals food must be carefully prepared. In the wilderness the giant panda, for example, eats mainly **bamboo**. In zoos, keepers mix bamboo with other food. Animals also get vitamins and other **supplements** to keep them healthy. Most big zoos have a **fulltime staff** of **veterinarians** and other health experts. They examine the animals and treat them **in case** they become ill. However, even in zoos, animals can get hurt. Small hospitals **stand by** if operations are necessary. Professional zookeepers **handle** the animals as little possible because too much stress may lead to illnesses.



HISTORY

People have observed and **tamed** wild animals for thousands of years. One of the earliest zoos was **founded** in **ancient** Egypt about 3000 years ago. **Emperors** in China, India and northern Africa set up **huge** zoos to show how rich they were. **Rulers** and rich people in **ancient** Rome and Greece kept private zoos. In Europe zoos became popular during the **Age of Exploration** when explorers and **navigators** returned from the New World with animals that Europeans had never seen before. Bears, lions or tigers were put in **menageries**. Later these collections were **replaced** with bigger places where animals **received** more care. The oldest zoo that is still open today is Schönbrunn Zoo in Vienna. It **dates back** to 1752. Other large zoos are in Madrid, Paris and Berlin.

HOW ZOOS OPERATE

Many large zoos are owned and operated by **local governments**. Some are owned by private investors or by **non-profit organizations**. **In addition** to getting some money by the state, they also charge **admission** for people to get in. Money also comes from gift shops, **donations** and **grants**.

A zoo must have a large staff too operate properly. The director is the head of the zoo and the **curator** is the manager and **supervises** the workers. Keepers take care of animals and **vets** give them **medical care**. Scientists study the animals' behavior and do research work.

In addition, there are many people who do not have direct contact with animals. **Employees** work in offices, as **security personnel** and tour guides.