



## Trunk - What are elephant's trunks for?

### Fact

- The trunk is actually a combination of the elephant's nose and its top lip.
- Elephants depend on their sense of smell more than anything else so they will use their trunk to sniff around all the time.
- The trunk is Prehensile (pre-hen-sigh-l), which means it can be used to grab things, like food.
- An elephant uses its trunk to carry food and water to its mouth.
- The trunk can be used to move or lift very heavy objects.
- Elephants also use their trunks to make trumpeting noises, which is one way they can communicate with each other.
- And they will use their trunks to touch things.

### Do you know

- When the wind is right an elephant can smell something three kilometres away.
- There are over fifty thousand muscles in an elephant's trunk and no bones.
- An elephant can suck up several litres of water with their trunks, either for drinking or having a shower.

### Experiments you can do

Next time you see an elephant at the Zoo, take note of how many things it does with its trunk. Can you see it using it's trunk to sniff things, to pick food up and put it in its mouth, to drink water, to spray itself with dust for a dust bath, to push something like a log along the ground?

If you listen carefully you might just hear the elephant communicating through its trunk!

### Other Investigations

Is an elephant a mammal? Have a look at the mammal fact sheet and see if you can work it out.

### Jokes

How do you stop an elephant from charging? Take away its credit card  
From Samara Hall

What should you do if an elephant breaks his toe? Ring for a tow truck.

Why does an elephant have a trunk? Because he can't afford a suitcase.  
From Peta