Raccoon fact sheet

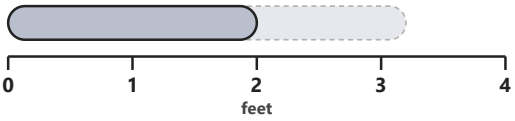
True facts about real raccoons



Fact card

Kind of animal	Mammal, in the family Procyonidae with coatis and kinkajous. Not a rodent.
Scientific name	Procyon lotor. "Lotor" means "the washer."
Length	60 to 95 cm with the tail (about 24 to 38 inches)
Tail	19 to 40 cm (about 8 to 16 inches), with 4 to 10 black rings
Weight	Most adults are 10 to 20 pounds (4.5 to 9 kg). Sources give from 4 up to 30 pounds or more.
Lives in	Southern Canada, most of the United States, Mexico and Central America
Eats	Almost anything: crayfish, frogs, insects, eggs, fruit, nuts and corn
Babies	Called kits or cubs. Usually 3 or 4, born in spring.
Lifespan	Usually 2 to 3 years in the wild. Up to 20 years in human care.
Status	Least Concern on the IUCN Red List, and their numbers are growing

How big is a raccoon?



A grown raccoon is about 24 to 38 inches long from nose to tail tip, which is 2 feet to a little over 3 feet. The dark part of the bar is the shortest adult and the light part is the longest.

Why two numbers?

Where sources give different numbers, this sheet gives the range. That is how scientists do it too.

My notes

8 true raccoon facts

1. A raccoon has five toes on each paw. PBS Nature says the front ones work like five little fingers.
2. Touch is a raccoon's sharpest sense, and its front paws become even more sensitive underwater.
3. A raccoon can turn its back feet around and climb down a tree head first.
4. Its bushy tail has 4 to 10 black rings.
5. Raccoons are not rodents. Their family includes coatis and kinkajous.
6. Raccoons swim well and can stay in the water for several hours.
7. Raccoons do not hibernate, but in cold places they can sleep in their dens for weeks.
8. Baby raccoons are called kits. You can see a kit's mask by the time it is about 10 days old.

Sources: Animal Diversity Web; National Geographic; PBS Nature; NatureWorks; San Diego Zoo; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and 12 more. Every source and link: lumiscove.com/animal-facts/raccoon

For personal and classroom use.

Raccoon quiz and report

Page 2. The answers are upside down at the bottom.

Name: _____

True or false?

Circle your answer. Try it before you look at the fact sheet.

1. Raccoons are rodents. **True** **False**
2. A raccoon has five toes on each paw. **True** **False**
3. Raccoons hibernate all winter. **True** **False**
4. Touch is a raccoon's sharpest sense. **True** **False**
5. Raccoons cannot swim. **True** **False**
6. Baby raccoons are called kits. **True** **False**

My raccoon report

A raccoon is a kind of

_____

Raccoons live in

_____

Raccoons eat

_____

My favorite fact

_____

_____

One thing I still wonder

_____

_____

Draw a raccoon

Answers: 1. False. Their family includes coatis and kinkajous. 2. True. The front ones work like five little fingers. 3. False. In cold places they can sleep in their dens for weeks, but they do not hibernate. 4. True. Its front paws are even more sensitive underwater. 5. False. They swim well. 6. True. There are usually 3 or 4, born in spring.

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