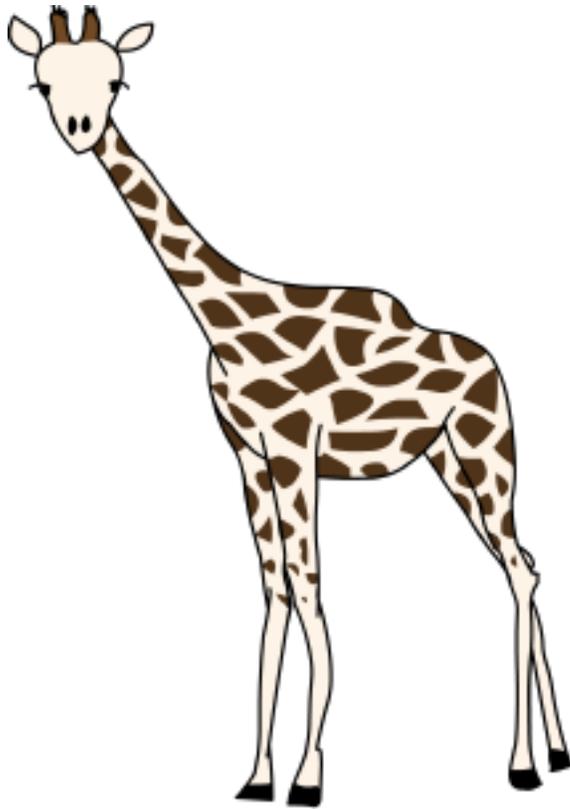


## Giraffe Profile



Helloooo down there! My name is Malik and I'm a giraffe. I am the world's tallest mammal standing 5.7 m from the tip of my toes to the top of my fur-covered horns. I'm also known as a silent animal. Giraffes don't make too much noise.

I only live on the African continent, specifically south of the Sahara desert to eastern Transvaal, Natal and northern Botswana. Giraffes used to be found in Western Africa but humans hunted us for our beautiful spotted brown and golden hide and because of this the populations there are now very tiny. Recently, humans created protected lands for us to roam called game reserves where we are safe from hunters.

Our food comes from the tasty Acacia tree. We love the leaves including the thorns- I'm

## Giraffe Family Tree

Kingdom: Animalia  
 Phylum: Chordata  
 Subphylum: Vertebrata  
 Class: Mammalia  
 Order: Artiodactyla  
 Family: Giraffidae  
 Genus: Giraffa  
 Species: Giraffa camelopardalis

able to crush the thorns between my teeth. I am an herbivore: I only eat leaves, flowers and fruit. My long neck and long black tongue help me reach my favorite foods from the high treetops. I even eat soil in from the salty savannah floor because it is rich in minerals. It's like taking a vitamin pill. I usually eat about 66 kg of food a day. That's a lot more than humans eat. I don't drink water all that often. My spots help me blend into the landscape of my habitat. It's camouflage. And like a human thumbprint, my spotted design never changes throughout my whole life. My design is unique to me. I have long sturdy legs for running fast and for kicking predators like the lions, leopards and hyenas. I spend most of my time standing- I even sleep standing up but my ears are always twitching, listening for trouble.

I spent over a year in my mom's belly and then when I was born, I dropped over 2 meters to the ground. Female giraffes are called cows, males are called bulls and babies are called calves. Cows only give birth to one calf but I do have older and younger siblings. We live in a herd of giraffes, kind of like an extended family with uncles, aunts, grandparents and friends. Giraffes are also homes to Oxpecker birds. These little birds sit on our backs and eat the bothersome ticks that make us itch.