



Monkey Business

Fact pack

Meet the family

Did you know monkeys and apes are your closest animal relatives? This is because we are all **primates**.

The most well-known primates are monkeys, gorillas, orangutans and chimpanzees – and you! But the family includes many other weird and wonderful mammals, like lemurs, lorises, bushbabies and tarsiers.



Meet the family: all these different animals are primates.

Here you can find out more about primates, and meet some of the family members. Use the information to think about:

- who you want the hero or heroine of your *Monkey Business* game to be
- where they live
- what they're trying to do in the game
- what may be stopping them from doing it.

You can cut this pack up and use the pictures and facts to spark some ideas.



Little and large

Primates range in size from the tiny mouse lemur, weighing just 30g, to the gorilla, which weighs up to 181kg. That's 6,000 times bigger!

This mighty **gorilla** came from West Africa. Gorillas live in forests and eat leaves, shoots and fruits.



Forest dwellers

Most primates live in dense forests or in open grasslands. Some live almost entirely in trees, others are happy moving about on the ground as well.

Orangutans like this one spend most of their time high up in trees. Their favourite food is fruit.



Hanging out

Slow lorises like this one live mostly in rainforests. They have strong hands and feet to help them hang in trees.

As their name suggests, slow lorises like to move slowly... but can move pretty quickly when they need to!



Family guys

Most primates live in large social groups, eating, playing and grooming together.

Macaques like this **lion-tailed macaque** are very sociable and live in large groups of up to 20 animals.



Dinner time

Primates eat different things, depending on where they live and what is available. Colobus monkeys eat leaves. Squirrel monkeys eat fruit. Geladas graze on grass and Goeldi's monkeys eat fungus!

Aye-eyes live on insects, which they remove from tree trunks using their specially adapted long middle finger.



Tools of the trade

Some primates use tools, such as sticks, stones and leaves, to help them.

Chimpanzees like this one use sticks to fish termites out of mounds. Chimpanzees are our closest relatives in the primate world.



Night sight

Some primates are nocturnal, which means they sleep during the day and come out at night. Nocturnal primates such as lorises and bushbabies have big eyes so they can see in the dark.

Doroucoulis like this one are the only nocturnal monkeys.



Noisy neighbours

Primates are very noisy. Howler monkeys are renowned for their harsh, loud calls, which can be heard over a mile away.

Gibbon couples sing together every morning to defend their territory and maintain their pair bond. This **white-cheeked gibbon**, like all gibbons, has a unique song, which he sings with his mate.



Colourful communicators

Primates can also communicate visually. Some have brightly-coloured faces and bottoms that may change colour depending on their mood.

The male **mandrill** has a brightly-coloured blue and red face and bottom. He yawns at rivals to scare them off with his large canine teeth.



Smelly signals

Some primates use scent as a way to communicate.

Male **ring-tailed lemurs** like this one wave their smelly tails at rivals to scare them away.



Primates in danger

Around a quarter of primate species are in danger of becoming extinct. This can be because their forest homes (or habitats) are being cut down to use as fuel or building materials, or to make way for farm land or homes for human beings.

Some primates are hunted for souvenirs, and others are captured and kept as pets. **Drills** like this one are illegally hunted and killed for bushmeat (wild animal meat).

How to help endangered primates

- Buy rainforest-friendly products, which are produced without harming natural environments.
- Join an environmental organisation, or raising money at school to help fund projects that protect primates.
- Help other people understand more about primates – you're doing this already by inventing a game!

Find out more

Visit these websites to find out more about primates and how you can help them:

Primate facts from the Smithsonian National Zoo
<https://nationalzoo.si.edu/Animals/Primates/Facts/>

Find out more about gorillas, chimps and orangutans at the World Wildlife Fund website
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/species>

Find out about the chimpanzees at Edinburgh Zoo
<http://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/animals-and-attractions/main-attractions/budongo-trail/>