

Hermit Crab



What do we look like?

Hermit crabs are crustaceans, so in place of bones we have a very hard outer body called an exoskeleton. The exoskeleton on the front of our bodies is tougher than the rest of our exoskeleton. Our long abdomen has a much softer exoskeleton so we find the unused shells of other water animals to wear as protection. That is how we got the name Hermit crab, by scavenging for seashells to use as homes. We have a lot of different colors depending on what species of crab we are.

Like most crabs, we have ten legs total, but two of our legs have special claws on them. Our large left claw is used for defense and to balance out the weight of our shells. Our smaller right claw is used for feeding ourselves. We also have two sets of antennae, the longer ones are used for feeling and the shorter ones are used for smelling and tasting.

As I grow, I will need to keep a lookout for bigger and better seashells to make my home. After all, do you wear the same clothes as you did when you were a baby? Probably not, you have to find bigger clothes as you grow.

Where do we live?

Hermit crabs make great pets. But in the wild you can find us on the tropical beaches west of the Caribbean or in salt water habitats like coral reefs or even the deep ocean. Terrestrial (land dwelling) crabs live close to the shoreline because we need access to both land and water. We prefer the climate to be warm, above 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and moist.



What do we eat?

In the wild hermit crabs are omnivorous scavengers meaning we eat whatever we can find. When we are a pet you can choose to feed us various types of food like fruits, vegetables, crab food, and fish food.



Cool Facts...

- As a Hermit Crab grows we need to shed our shell to find a bigger one so we will fit in side for protection. But the shell that we may find could have belonged to hundreds of different crabs.
- Hermit Crabs molt, meaning we shed our exoskeleton every so often.
- NEVER try to pull out a Hermit crab from its shell. I would rather be torn in half than leave my home.
- We are very social animals. We can live in groups, or colonies, of up to 100 crabs.

