



Put all the cards  
that describe  
dinosaurs that  
ate meat here!

Animals that eat meat  
are called **carnivores**.



Put all the cards  
that describe  
dinosaurs that  
ate plants here!

Animals that eat plants  
are called **herbivores**.



Walked on  
four legs



Walked on  
two legs



Flatter,  
wider teeth



Sharper  
teeth



Swallowed  
rocks to help  
digest food



Often had horns,  
bony skull frills,  
or  
thickened bones



Thumb  
spikes



Sharp  
claws



Powerful  
legs  
for  
running  
quickly



Eyes on the  
front *or* side  
of their heads



Eyes on the  
sides of  
their heads

Once you've sorted the cards into herbivores and carnivores, use this sheet to check your work and learn more about paleontology and dinosaurs.

Paleontology is the study of life from the deep past through fossils of plants, animals, and other organisms that lived thousands or millions of years ago. A fossil is preserved evidence of past life, and can be a body fossil (bone, teeth, leaves, or shells) or a trace fossil (footprints or coprolites, which is fossilized poop!).

When paleontologists find fossils from different animals in the same layer of the earth, that can mean those animals lived at the same time. One example is the *Hell Creek* diorama at MPM. The exhibit shows the *Tyrannosaurus rex*, *Triceratops*, *Struthiomimus*, and *Dromaeosaur* in one time and place because our scientists found their fossils together.

Dinosaurs are just one kind of animal that paleontologists study. Some, the meat-eaters, were predators, or an animal that eats other animals. Others, largely the plant-eaters, were prey, or animals that predators eat.

## Carnivores

- **Sharper teeth**  
*Helped the dinosaur slice into other animals. The T. rex had serrated teeth, meaning the edges of its teeth were jagged or sawlike.*
- **Sharp claws**  
*Helped meat-eating dinosaurs tear into prey.*
- **Walked on two legs**  
*Helped the dinosaur run quickly to catch other dinosaurs to eat.*
- **Powerful legs**  
*Helped the dinosaur run quickly to catch other dinosaurs to eat.*
- **Eyes on front or side of their heads**  
*Eyes facing front helped the dinosaur focus on its prey.*

## Herbivores

- **Walked on four legs**  
*Some four-legged dinosaurs' heads were low, so they ate plants near the ground. Some had long necks and ate food high in trees.*
- **Flatter, wider teeth**  
*Helped the dinosaurs grind the plants they ate.*
- **Swallowed rocks to help digest food**  
*Paleontologists call these rocks gastroliths. Some animals today exhibit the same behavior.*
- **Often had horns, bony skull frills, or thickened bones**  
*Helped the dinosaur protect itself from predators.*
- **Thumb spikes**  
*May have been used for food or defense.*
- **Eyes on the sides of their heads**  
*Helped them keep a lookout for predators.*