



Elephants  
trunks are like  
drinking  
straws!

## Trunks come in all sizes

- The elephant trunk is made up totally of muscle. There are no bones in the trunk. Muscle is very strong and so is an elephant trunk since it has 100,000+ muscles!
- The rings you see on the trunk make it very flexible. It can bend any way the elephant wants much like the hose behind your clothes dryer.
- If you stretched out the trunk of an adult male elephant, it would be taller than a 6' tall man. That's a lot of trunk.
- Baby elephants have to learn how to control their trunks. Those wiggly trunks go every which way and they don't always know which way it's going! After about 3-4 months, they start to figure it out and gain more control.
- Baby elephants suck on their trunks for comfort, just like a thumb-sucking baby.

## No forks or spoons needed

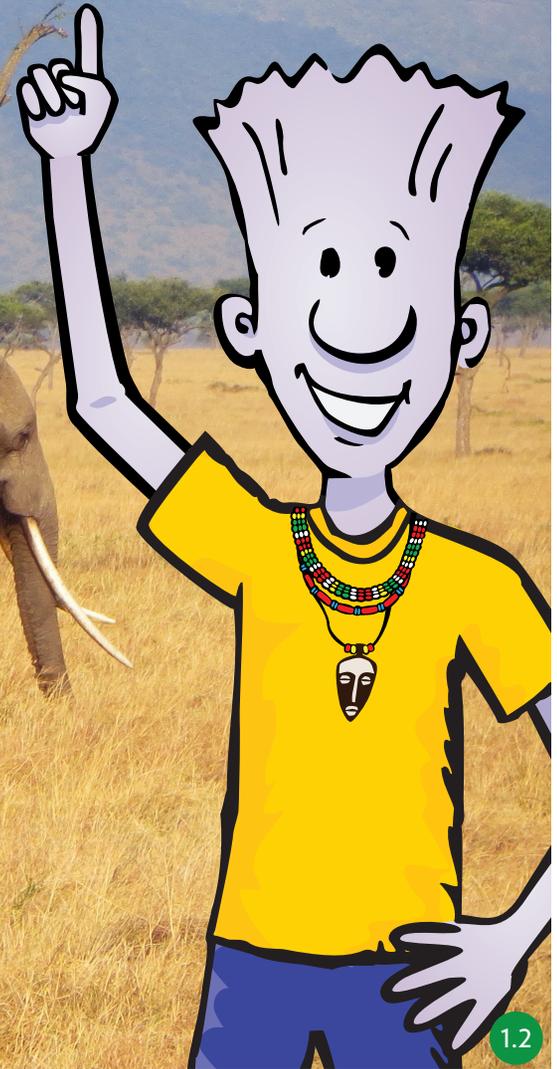
- Elephants use their trunks to suck up water and hold it. Then they put their trunks in their mouths and drink the water, just like using a straw!
- An adult elephant can suck up about a gallon of water in its trunk.
- Sometimes water is hard to find. But an elephant can store water in a special pouch in their throat. Later when they are thirsty, their trunk sucks water out of the pouch and takes a drink! Ingenious!
- An elephant has two "fingers" on the end of its trunk. These fingers can pick up a single blade of grass, a berry from a bush or a bunch of small leaves on the ground.
- The trunk can be used as a scoop to pick up a bunch of tall grass or leaves to eat.

## Take your trunks when swimming

- It's hot in Africa. Just like you, elephants cool down by going swimming. If the water is deep enough – they might even go completely under the water. Their trunk can stay above water and allows them to get air, just like a snorkell!
- If the water isn't deep enough for swimming, they can use their trunks like a hose! An elephant can suck up a gallon of water and blow it out on their backs...ahh – a cool, wet shower of water on a hot day.
- What happens when there is no water and they are hot? How about a trunk full of dust to spray all over their backs. It cools them down, keeps them from getting a sunburn and stops bugs from biting them.
- Trunks make the best tools
- Elephants can get very itchy! They will use their trunks to break off a branch and make their own personal back scratcher.
- Elephants have been known to grab a branch with leaves and use it to swat at pesky flies.
- Without a trunk, the elephant couldn't blow a lot of air and make lots of loud sounds. If you are close to an elephant when it trumpets, you will feel the force of the air blowing through its trunk.
- Without a trunk, the elephant couldn't possibly clean out those huge ears. They don't have cotton swabs, but they will use their trunks to grab a big clump of grass to clean out their ears.
- Elephants are great problem solvers. If a tree falls in front of them and is blocking their path, they will pick it up and move it. If they can't reach something, they will move a big tree branch over and stand on it to get higher.



Humans hold hands... elephants hold tails.



- Elephants of all ages wrap their trunks around other elephants trunks and heads to hug them and show affection.
- Mama elephant trunks help the baby from the moment they are born. The baby is pretty wobbly and the trunk can help them get up and stay up right after they are born.
- Baby elephants get hugged by all the other elephants in the herd. They have many mothers in the herd since the herd is only made up of female elephants. The adult male elephants are not a part of the herd.
- Elephants will use their trunks to bring “gifts” after the mama elephant has given birth. The best gift: food to eat! An elephant eats a lot every day so the gift of grass, leaves and tree bark is a much appreciated gift after delivering a big baby elephant.
- Baby elephants need a lot of comfort. Hugs are the best way to make a baby elephant feel happy. Hugs and food!
- Other elephants help feed the baby by using their trunks to gather grasses and leaves. They even put the food in the baby’s mouth until they learn how to use their trunks better.
- Adult elephants care about the baby elephants in their herd. They will all pitch in and hug and protect the babies in the herd, even if they are not the mama.
- Baby elephants and young teen elephants will use their trunks to grab hold of the tail of the elephant in front of them. It’s just like holding hands with your family when you go for a walk.

friends  
greet  
each other  
with a hug!



# 1.3 NED'S ELEPHANT FACTS TRUNKS SAY "HELLO!"

- Elephants have poor eyesight. They are the largest land mammal but their eyes are small in comparison to their large bodies.
- An elephant will put its trunk high up in the air to sniff the air. They are sniffing our friends or enemies nearby.
- Elephants can smell other animals and people within a 5 mile radius. It's hard to sneak up on an elephant if the wind is blowing the right direction.
- An elephant uses its trunk to smell and touch another elephant friend. They know and remember what friends smell like.
- Caregivers who have rescued and helped hurt elephants are remembered for the rest of their lives, even if the elephant hasn't seen the caregiver in over a year!
- Elephants will put their trunks inside each other's mouths as a way of saying "hi!" Now that's a mouthful of hello!
- Elephants will wrap their trunks around each other's trunks and heads, greeting each other with elephant hugs. They even squeeze a little – just like when you hug someone tight!