



Fun Facts about Badgers

Supporting the Badger Baiting School Awareness Video

The badger is an elusive animal that many of us don't know very much about.

We hope that by watching our educational video and learning a little bit more about badgers, we can help shed some light on the lives of these beautiful animals and inspire teenagers to care about and protect their welfare.

Here are 15 facts about badgers that you might not know:

1. As you learned in the video, badgers live in underground tunnel and chamber systems known as setts. The longest Eurasian Badger sett is 879m long, it has 178 entrances and 50 chambers!
2. A badger can grow up to 1 metre long as it has loose skin to allow it to wiggle its way out of a fight with predators!
3. There are many different types of badgers around the world. The kind of badger we have in the UK is the Eurasian badger, but there is also the American badger, the Japanese badger, the Hog badger, Ferret badgers, the Honey badger, and Stink badgers!
4. It is estimated that the Japanese badger diverged from the European clade roughly 467,100 years ago via the Korean-Japan land bridge.
5. Whilst badgers live communally, they prefer to forage (go and find food) alone.
6. Badgers are best described as generalist foragers; this means they eat lots of different foods. However, as you know, they eat a large quantity of earthworms. A British badger may consume over 200 worms during a night when feeding conditions are good.
7. Irish badgers by comparison, don't eat many worms at all! Their diets are more similar to badgers found in Italy and Spain than in England. They change their food sources throughout the seasons to include lots of different types of bugs, bulbs, or even small mammals, amphibians and birds!
8. Badgers are alloparental - which means adults will care for young badgers that are not their own offspring.
9. Male badgers carry out most of the chores in the sett! They are more likely to collect and replace bedding and dig the sett.
10. A male badger is called a boar, a female is a sow (like pigs!) and young badger is called a cub.
11. Interestingly, badger clans tend to become increasingly female biased with age.
12. Badgers are heavily protected by law, and it is a criminal offence to deliberately harm, kill, possess a badger, or interfere with a badger sett.



13. Unfortunately, badgers have a high juvenile mortality rate. This means lots of badgers die before they reach adulthood, with roughly 50% not making it past their first year! This makes it even more important for us to protect them.
14. Badgers' setts can play a crucial role in plant biodiversity. A study found greater bryophyte (mosses, liverworts, hornworts) diversity in and around setts. This is most likely due to the soil disturbance they cause.
15. Sense of smell is incredibly important for badgers. It's how they tell friend from foe, mark their territories and communicate with one another. Badgers also have several scent glands which produce different smells to tell other badgers' information. This is used for sending warning signals and letting other badgers know their mating status.