



People tend to categorize turtles, snakes, lizards, and crocodiles with animals like newts, salamanders, frogs, and toads. They are all low to the ground and usually live in or near water, so it can be hard to remember which animals are reptiles and which are amphibians!

Even though reptiles and amphibians seem so similar, below we share tips on how to tell the difference between reptiles and amphibians. Keep score of how many points each class earns on the next page and discover which team turtles play for.

## On the Outside:

**If you know what to look for, telling a reptile apart from an amphibian is easy!**



Reptiles have scaly, dry skin, while amphibians have smooth, moist skin. Look at the picture of the turtle below. Its skin is scaly and rough. Mark one point for the reptile side!



Reptiles lay eggs on land, and the eggs have an outer protective casing. Most amphibians lay their soft eggs in water. Where has the turtle in the second image laid her eggs? Two points for reptiles!



Look at the turtle hatchlings on the right. They look just like adult turtles. Amphibian babies hatch and don't look anything like the adults they will become. The reptile team has three points!



# On the Inside:

**Reptiles and amphibians are different on the inside, too. Take a look.**



Reptiles have lungs and can only breathe oxygen from the air. Amphibians, on the other hand, get their oxygen from soaking up water through their skin, and some even have gills to breathe underwater. Does the turtle below have lungs or gills? Another point for team reptile!



Amphibians have glands under their skin that secrete poison. Reptiles, however, do not have these same glands. Do you see any poison glands under the turtle's skin? And the last point goes to . . . the reptile team!



## Scoreboard

**REPTILES**

**AMPHIBIANS**

**There you have it. Is a turtle a reptile? Turtles definitely play for the reptile team.**

# WHAT'S UNDER THE SHELL?

## ACTIVITY

**Give each child a pair of scissors and a copy of the “Turtle Shell” page. Have them cut out the shell as you read:**

A turtle can never leave its shell because its backbone and ribs are fused to the inside. The shell acts like armor against predators and environmental dangers. It keeps them safe from bumps and cuts, and if a predator threatens them, some turtles can pull their heads, tails, and limbs inside the protective shell.

**Once the children have cut out the turtle shell, line it up with the “What’s Under the Shell?” page and apply a strip of tape along the top edge. Have the children examine the shell as you read:**

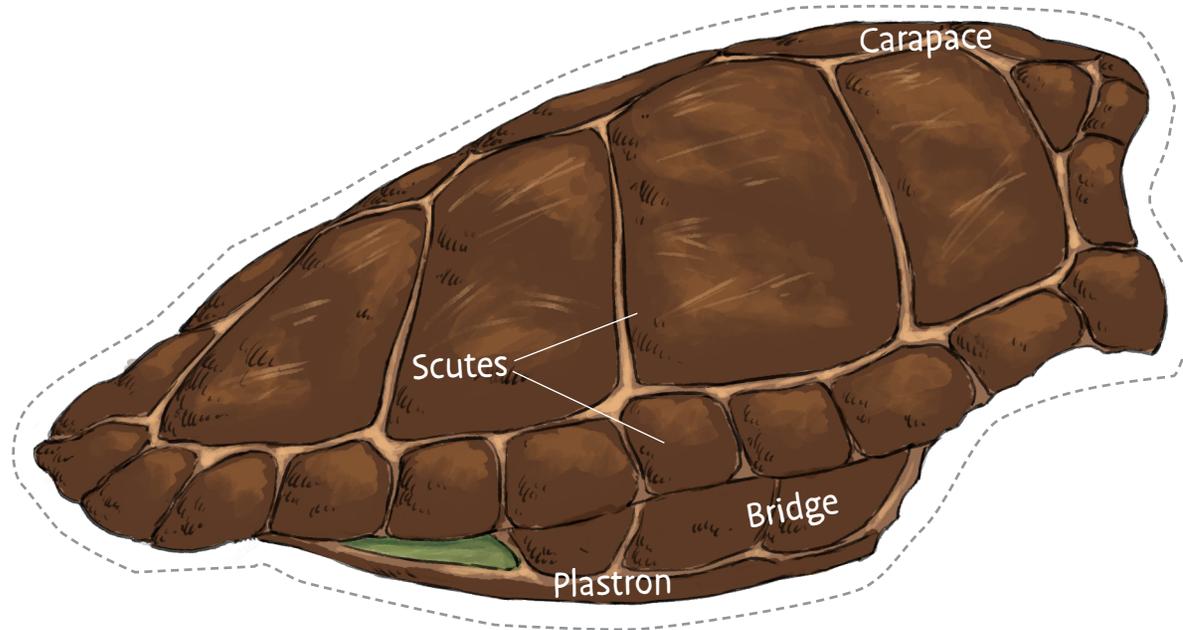
The turtle’s shell is made of several different parts. The top part of the shell on the turtle’s back is called the carapace [CARE-uh-pace], and the bony plastron [PLAS-trun] covers its belly. These are both joined together by a thick bridge. The shell is covered with platelike structures made of keratin called scutes [skoots], from the Latin word for shield.

**Have the children lift the shell and examine the diagram as you read:**

Enclosed within the shell are the internal organs of the turtle. What is inside a turtle’s body that is similar to what is inside a human body? [We share the same organs, including lungs.] What is different? [The bones and organs are positioned differently.] How do you think the shell protects the internal organs? [It provides a tough casing and is an extension of the spine and rib cage.] Why do you think the lungs are placed as they are in the turtle? [Like other animals, they are positioned up high, so they are not compressed by other body parts.]

**Discover more in *The Good and the Beautiful’s* new *Reptiles, Amphibians, and Fish* science unit.**

# Turtle Shell



## What's Under the Shell?

