

# Scientific keys: fish

## How to use?


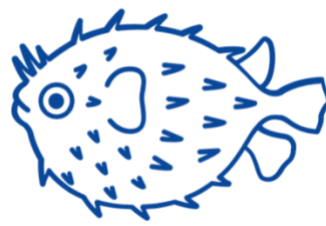
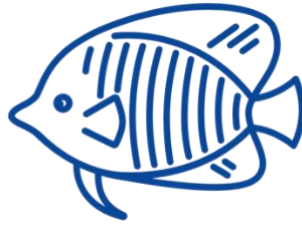
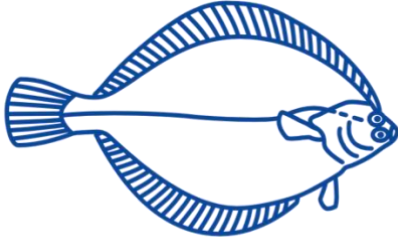
See teacher outline [Fish Body Shapes \(Adaptations\)](#) for activities and slide set [Fish Body Shapes \(Adaptations\)](#) for further context.

NOTE: These keys have been adapted from an activity by [Monterey Bay Aquarium](#)



# Scientific key 1: fish Body shapes

(Clues to where & how a fish lives)

<p><b>Torpedo shape</b> (Open water)</p>	
<p><b>Boxy shape</b> (Among coral and rocks)</p>	
<p><b>Round &amp; narrow</b> (Tight places)</p>	
<p><b>Flat</b> (Sandy bottom)</p>	



**Elongated**  
(Around and under rocks)

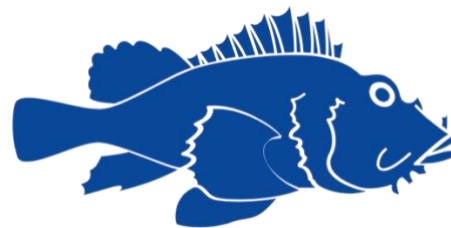


## Scientific key 2: fish Eye shapes (Clues to where a fish spends time)

**One eye on each side**  
(Usually swims above the sea  
floor)

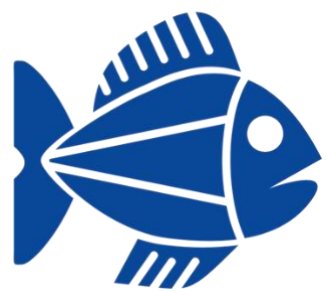


**Both eyes on top of  
head**  
(Sits on or near the seafloor)

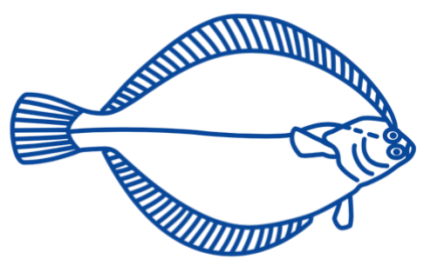




**Large eyes**  
(Light gathering / spends time in dark places)

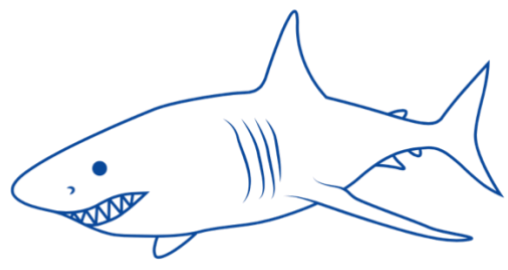


**Both eyes on one side of head**  
(Usually stays on the sea floor)



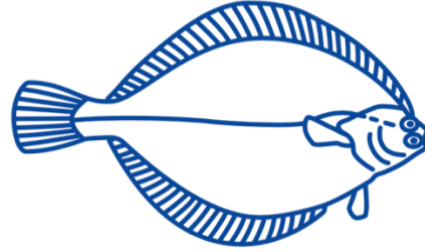
## Scientific key 3: fish Mouth Shapes (Clues to how & Where it eats)

**Mouth with teeth**  
(Bites & catches prey)

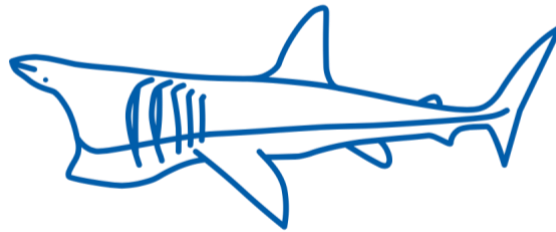




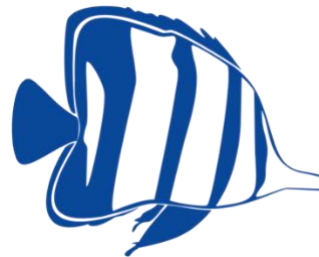
**Mouth on  
underside**  
(Bottom feeder)



**Big wide mouth**  
(Gulps its food)



**Long skinny mouth**  
(Probes into cracks)



## Scientific key 4: fish CAUDAL OR TAIL

### FINS

(Clues to swimming speed)

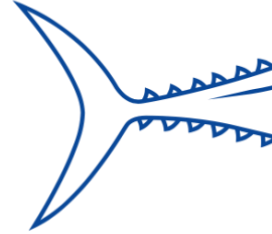
**Squared / truncated tail fin**  
(Moderate speed; sprint starts)







**Forked tail fin**  
(Very fast speed,  
often open water habitat)



**Pointed tail fin**  
(Fast speed)

