

Shark Dichotomous Key

1. A. Body kitelike in shape (if view from above).....Go to statement 12
 B. Body not kitelike in shape (if view fro above) Go to statement 2
2. A. Pelvic fin absent and nose sawlike Family Pristophoridae
 B. Pelvic fin present.....Go to statement 3
3. A. Six gill slits present.....Family Hexanchidae
 B. Five gills present.....Go to statement 4
4. A. Only one dorsal fin present.....Family Scyliorhinidae
 B. Two dorsal fins present.....Go to statement 5
5. A. Mouth at the front of the head rather than back along underside of head.....Family Rhinocodontidae
 B. Mouth back along underside of head.....Go to statement 6
6. A. Head expanded on the side with eyes at the end of expansion.....Family Sphyrnidae
 B. Head not expanded.....Go to statement 7
7. A. Top half of caudal fin exactly same size and shape as bottom half.....Family Isuridae
 B. Top half of caudal different in size and shape from the bottom half.....Go to statement 8
8. A. First dorsal fin very long, almost half the length of the total body.....Family Pseudotriakidae
 B. first dorsal fin length much less than the half the total length of body.....Go to statement 9
9. A. Caudal fin very long, almost as long as the entire body.....Family Alopiidae
 B. Caudal fin length much less than length of entire body.....Go to statement 10
10. A. Nose with long needlelike point on end.....Family Scapanorhynchidae
 B. Nose without needlelike point.....Go to statement 11
11. A. Anal fin absent.....Family Squalidae
 B. Anal fin present.....Family Carcharhinidae
12. A. Small dorsal fin present near tip of tail.....Family Rajidae
 B. Small dorsal fin absent near tip of tail.....Go to statement 13
13. A. Hornlike appendages at front of shark.....Family Mobulidae
 B. Hornlike appendages not present at front of shark.....Family Dasyatidae