

Intestines are about 8m long

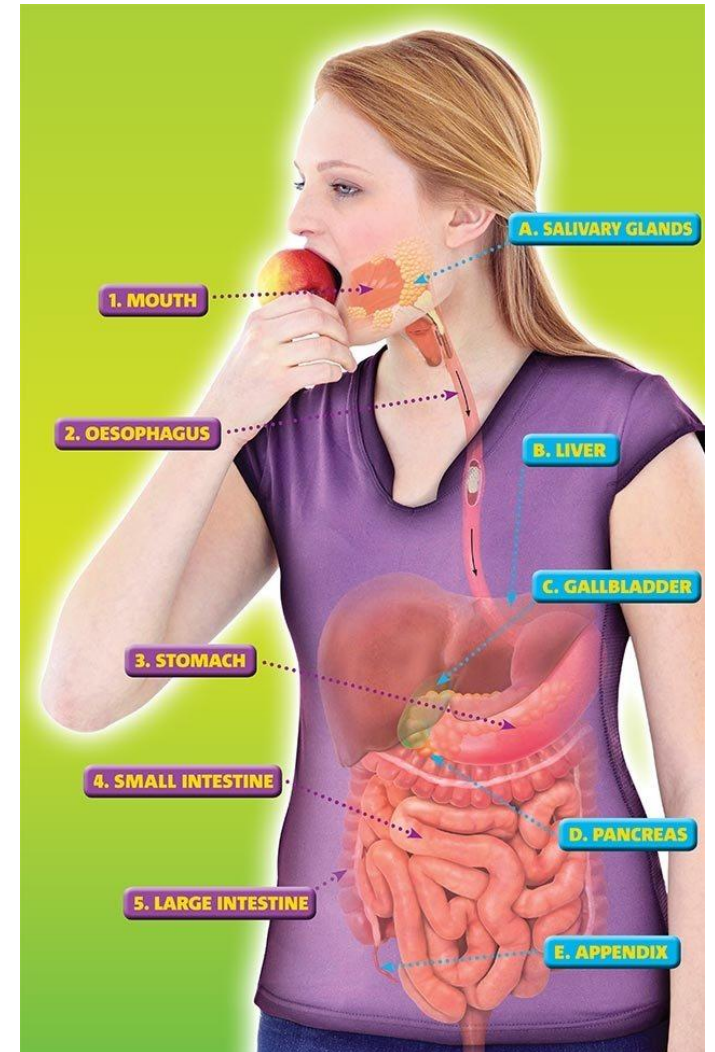
0.25m is the oesophagus

6.25m is the approx length of the small intestine

1.5m is the approx length of the large intestine

1) Mouth

- It all starts here! Up to 28 strong **teeth*** chomp your food, breaking it into smaller bits. Meanwhile, the **tongue** keeps moving the food around, shifting it to the type of teeth that will be best at munching it. It also squeezes the chewed grub into swallowable lumps, pushing them back towards the throat. Gulp!
- ***Fast fact:*** *When you swallow, a little flap of cartilage called the epiglottis closes off the windpipe so food doesn't go down there by mistake.*



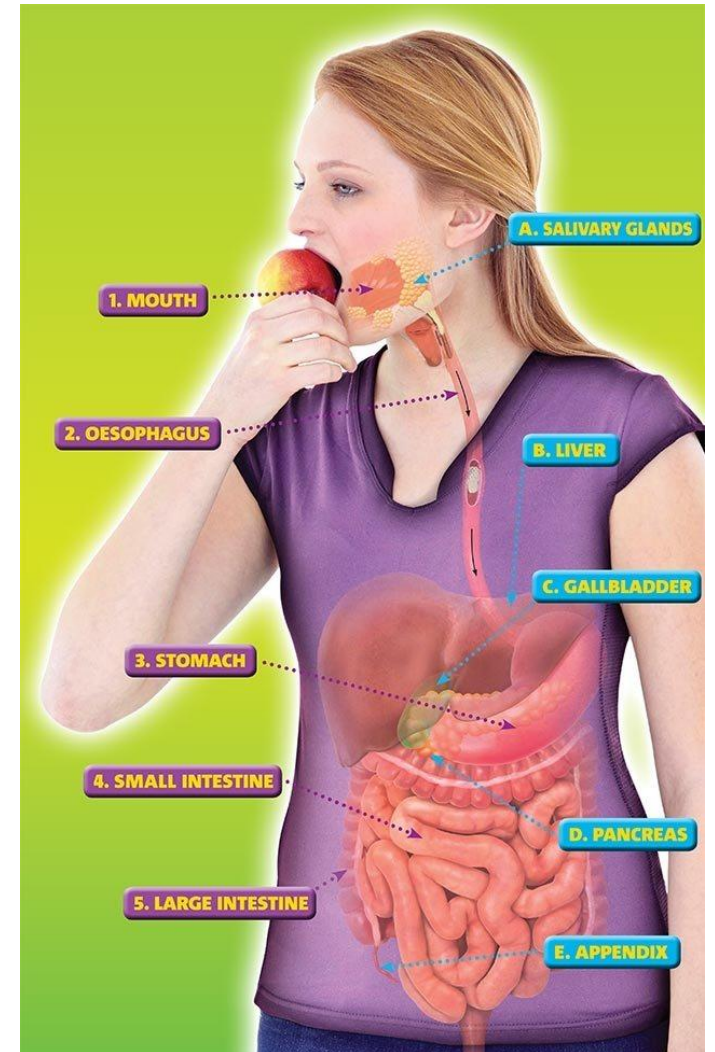
Watch this BBC Bitesize video on the mouth:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z27kng8/articles/zg2g7p3>

Maybe you could try the activity on the web page!

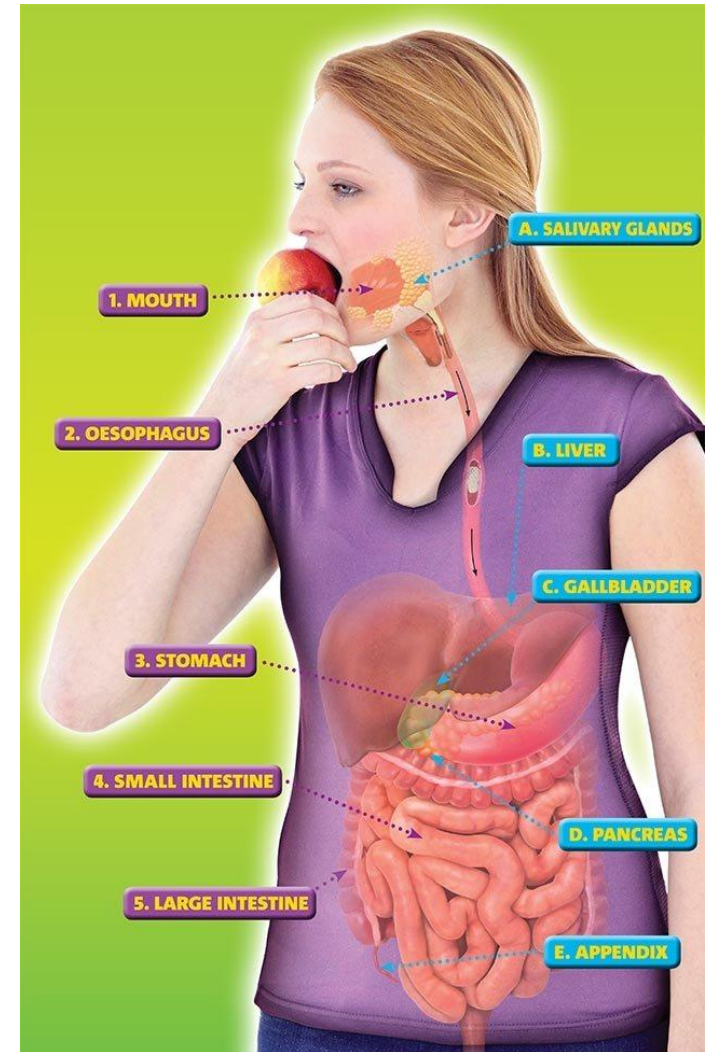
2) Oesophagus

- Also known as the **gullet**, this 25cm-long tube contracts to shift chewed food down to your stomach. The squeezing motion of the muscles is called **peristalsis** and it occurs throughout the digestive system. A slimy mucus is also oozed from the oesophagus to help the food on its way. Easy does it!
- ***Fast fact:*** Thanks to peristalsis, food would get to your stomach even if you were standing on your head!



3) Stomach

- Next stop – the stomach! This stretchy muscular bag is about the size of a **tennis ball** when it's empty, but expands to the size of a **football** to store a massive meal. As soon as food plops inside, the stomach lining releases digestive juices and acid that break down the food even more, killing harmful **bacteria**. Muscles slosh and squelch the food together with the juices until it becomes a sloppy soup called **chyme** that's ready to be squirted into the **small intestine**...
- ***Fast fact:*** *The acid in your stomach is so strong it could dissolve an iron nail!** To stop your stomach digesting itself, it's lined with a protective mucus, and your stomach cells are replaced every few days.



* Please do not eat a nail. Ever.

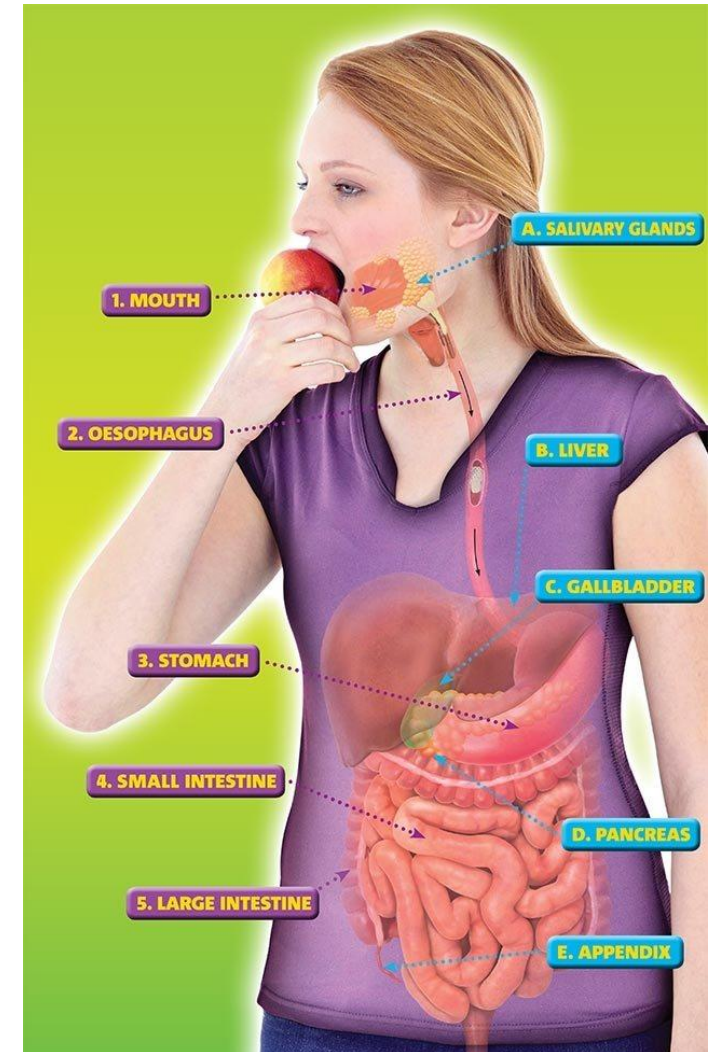
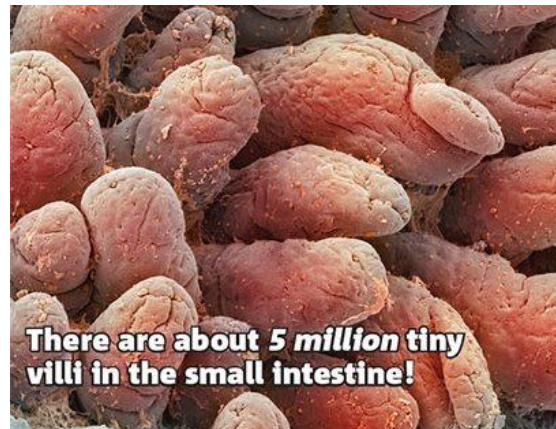
Watch this BBC Bitesize video on the stomach:

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Maybe you could try the activity on the web page!

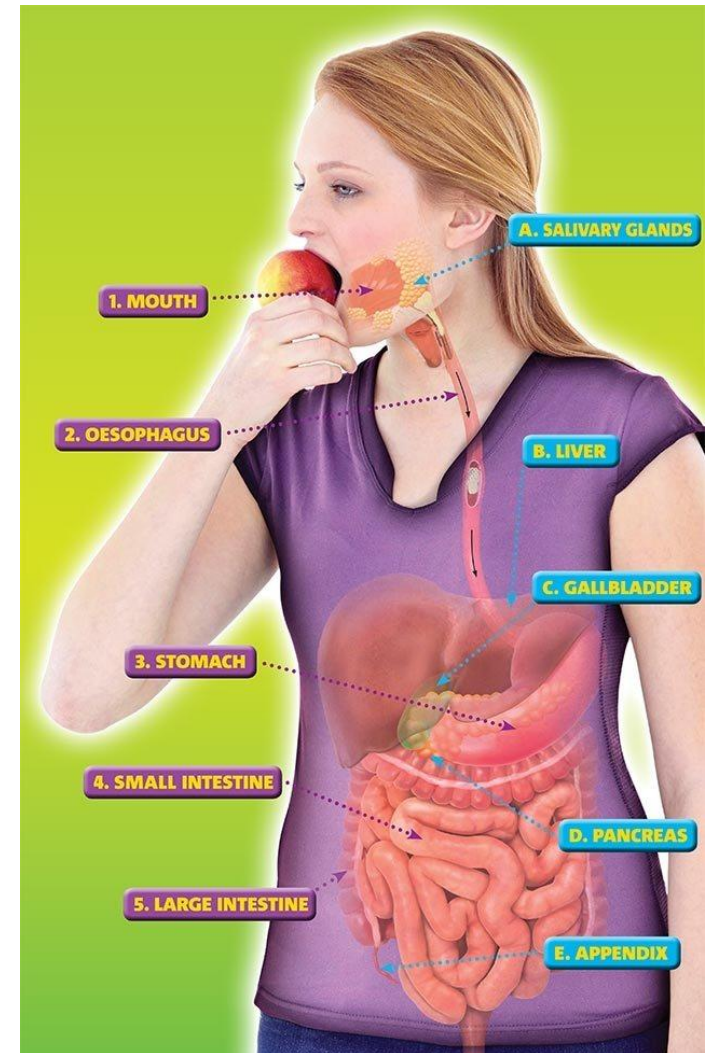
4) Small Intestine

- Despite the name, this section of your digestive tract is really not that small – it’s a whopping 6.5-metres-long! It’s in this 3cm-wide tube that all the **nutrients** in your mashed-up food pass through the **small-intestine** lining into the **blood**. Once all the goodness is gone, the sloppy mixture passes to the next part of the intestines...
- **Fast fact:** *The lining of the small intestine is covered with teeny finger-like bumps called “villi”. They give the lining a large surface area to help with absorption.*



4) Large Intestine

- More than twice as wide as the small intestine, but only 1.5-metres-long, the job of the **large intestine** is to soak up water, salts and minerals from the indigestible leftovers. Finally, the remaining semi-solid waste, called **faeces**, travels to the **lower colon** and rectum for storage. When you go to the loo, a ring of muscle called the **anus** relaxes to allow the poo out!
- ***Fast fact:*** *Your small and large intestines together are known as your bowels!*



Watch this BBC Bitesize video on the intestines:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z27kng8/articles/zgt96yc>

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Other parts...

A. SALIVARY GLANDS

- Most of the slimy liquid in your mouth is produced by three pairs of **salivary glands**. This **saliva** moistens food, making it easier to swallow. It's also full of chemicals called **enzymes** that help to break down food. Amazingly, just the **smell** of good grub can make your mouth start to water!
- **Fast fact:** *Your salivary glands can produce up to six cups of saliva per day. Squelch!*

B. LIVER

- This busy brown organ is your largest internal organ and has about **500 different jobs!** It's like a chemical processing factory – blood carries nutrients there from the small intestine, then the liver decides what to do with them. It also gets rid of **toxins** (substances that can be harmful to the body), **recycles old blood cells**, makes bile and other digestive juices, and produces, stores and releases **glucose** (to give you energy).
- **Fast fact:** *About one third of the body's blood flows through the liver every minute!*

C. GALLBLADDER

- The role of this green, pear-shaped organ is to store **bile** and make it thicker and stronger before adding it to the small intestine.



D. PANCREAS

- Your **pancreas** makes chemicals called **enzymes** which help digest nutrients in your food. It also makes **insulin**, a hormone which helps control your blood sugar levels.

E. APPENDIX

- Doctors used to think that this thin little organ was useless – a leftover body part from early humans. But today it's thought that the **appendix** stores “**good bacteria**” that can help your digestive system work again after you've been poorly.

