

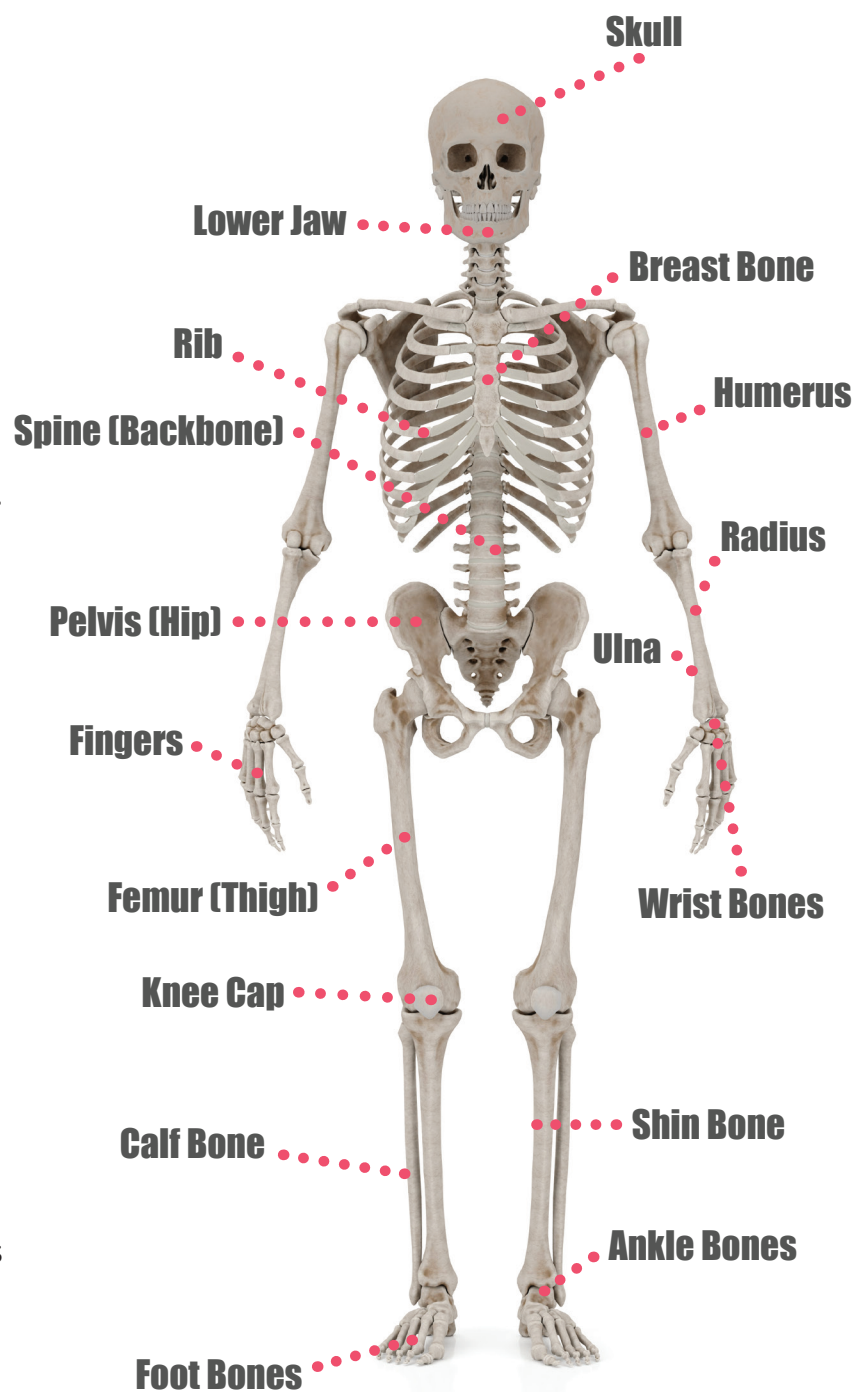
The Skeleton

A skeleton is a framework designed to support a living creature. Not all animals have skeletons, and not all skeletons are made from bones. Insects have skeletons, but they are the hard casing on the outside of their body. These are called exoskeletons. Animals such as jellyfish, slugs and snails don't have a skeleton at all. These are called invertebrates.

The human skeleton is a feat of engineering. Without it, we wouldn't be able to move or even survive. Not only does it support our body, but it also works as an interior suit of armour. Your lungs and heart are protected by your ribs. Your brain is safely encased inside your skull. All of the major nerves are nestled inside your spinal column.

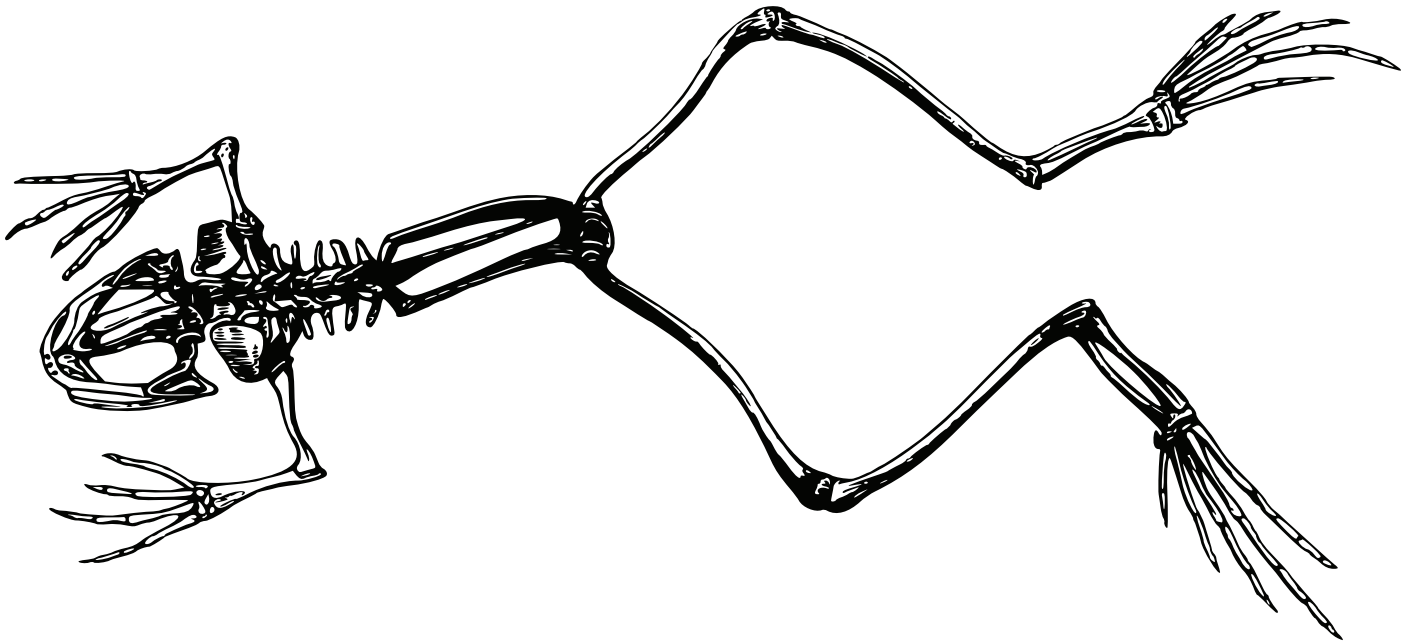
You have around 270 bones in your body when you are born. Some of these fuse together as you grow up. You will only have 206 by the time you are an adult. Over half of these are grouped together in your hands and feet.

The largest bone in your body is your femur,



or thigh bone. The smallest is called the stapes and is one of the small bones inside your ear that help you to hear. It is about the same size as a nail clipping.

Did you know that every bone in your body is connected to another, except for one? The hyoid bone is in your throat and isn't connected to any other bone. It's only job is to hold your tongue in place at the back of your throat.



RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. At what stage in your life are you most likely to have 270 bones?
2. What does our skeleton do as well as supporting us?
3. Where are most of the bones in your body?
4. Complete: The bone that holds your tongue in place is called a _____.
5. What is another name for a thigh bone?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

V

Using the context of the text, what do you think the prefix *exo* means?

S

Which two bones make up your lower arm?

I

What tells you that the author might not expect everybody to know about the hyoid?

S

Name one bone connected to the knee cap.

V

Find a word that is a synonym for tiny.

Answers:

1. Unique
2. And
3. Reacts
4. A nostril has to remove particles and viruses from the air
5. Fastest

V: Outside/exterior

S: Ulna and radius

I: The author asks whether the reader knows not all bones are connected

S: Femur (thigh bone), calf bone, shin bone

V: Minuscule