# How Living Things are Organized and Named

KS4 BIOLOGY Ages 11-14 ⏰ 3 min read

## Why Do We Need to Organize Life?

Imagine walking into a library with millions of books all mixed up on the floor. You'd never find what you wanted! Scientists faced the same problem when they looked at nature. There are over **8 million different living things** on Earth, and we needed a way to organize them so we could study and understand them better.

This is where **classification** comes in. It's the system scientists use to sort all living things into groups based on what they have in common. Think of it like organizing your toys by type, size, or color.

Think of it like a filing system in a school office. All the Year 10 students go in one drawer, then boys and girls might be separated, then alphabetized by last name. Living things work the same way—sorted into bigger and bigger groups.

## The Seven Levels of Life

Scientists organize living things into **seven main levels**, starting with the biggest groups and getting more specific. These are: **Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus**, and **Species**. Many people remember this with the phrase "King Philip Came Over For Good Soup."

The **Kingdom** is the largest group. All animals are in the Animal Kingdom, all plants are in the Plant Kingdom, and there are also kingdoms for fungi, bacteria, and protists. Then each kingdom breaks down into smaller groups. For example, humans are in the Animal Kingdom, then the Phylum called Chordata (animals with backbones), then Class Mammalia (animals that feed milk to babies), and so on.

Think of it like a neighborhood. The Kingdom is the whole town, Phylum is a street, Class is a block, and Species is your exact house address.

## Scientific Names

Every living thing also gets a **scientific name** made of two parts, usually in Latin. For humans, it's **Homo sapiens**. The first word is the **Genus** (the group it belongs to), and the second word is the **Species** (what makes it unique). Scientists use these names because common names change around the world—a robin in America is different from a robin in Europe, but Latin names are the same everywhere.

Understanding classification helps us see how all life on Earth is connected. It shows us that we share features with other animals, and helps us protect endangered species by understanding what they need to survive.