



Microorganisms and Where They Live

KS2 SCIENCE Ages 9-12 🕒 3 min read

What Are Microorganisms?

Microorganisms are living things so tiny that you cannot see them with just your eyes. You need a special tool called a **microscope** to see them. Even though they are invisible to us, microorganisms are everywhere around you, and many are actually really important for life on Earth.

The main types of microorganisms are **bacteria**, **viruses**, **fungi**, and **protozoa**. Bacteria are single-celled organisms that have no nucleus. Viruses are much smaller and need a host cell to reproduce. Fungi include things like yeast and mould. Protozoa are larger single-celled creatures that can move around.

Think of it like this: if a human were the size of a football stadium, a microorganism would be the size of a marble inside that stadium!

Where Do Microorganisms Live?

Microorganisms live almost everywhere on our planet. You'll find them in **soil**, **water**, **air**, and even inside living things like plants and animals. In fact, there are more microorganisms in your body right now than there are cells that make up your body!

In the soil, microorganisms help break down dead plants and animals, returning nutrients to the earth so new plants can grow. In water, some microorganisms form the base of the food chain that feeds fish and other sea creatures. Even in the air, tiny microorganisms float around waiting to land somewhere they can survive.

Think of it like this: your skin is like a whole universe where trillions of bacteria live peacefully, mostly helping keep you healthy.

Are Microorganisms Good or Bad?

Many people think all microorganisms are dangerous, but that's not true! Some bacteria help make yoghurt, cheese, and bread. Others live in your gut and help you digest food. However, some microorganisms can make you ill if they get into your

body. Bacteria like those that cause **food poisoning** and viruses that cause the flu are harmful.

Scientists study microorganisms because understanding them helps us stay healthy, create new medicines, and make better food. So even though you can't see them, microorganisms are actually one of the most important types of life on Earth!