

4 The Hippopotamus



The hippopotamus, or hippo, lives in the hot part of Africa. It is a **mammal**. That is, its babies are born **alive**, and they drink milk from the mother's body.

The hippopotamus is a **large** animal. It weighs four tons. Its **stomach** is seven meters long, and it eats only **plants**. It is a mammal, but it **spends** a lot of time in the water.

During the day, it sleeps **beside** a river or a **lake**. Sometimes it wakes up. Then it goes under the water to get some plants for food. It can close its nose and **stay** under water for ten minutes. Its ears, eyes, and nose are **high** up on its head. It can stay with its body under the water and only its ears, eyes, and nose **above** the water. Then it can **breathe** the air.

At night, the hippo walks on the land and looks for food. It never goes very far from the water.

A baby hippo often stands on its mother's back. The mother looks for food underwater. The baby rides on her back above the water.

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