

# Animal Speak: Beastly Language [B1]

Per distinguere la miriade di suoni emessi dagli animali, in inglese si ricorre a un curioso adattamento delle loro onomatopee.

---

The English language has [come up](#) with its own inventive ways to describe the [wide range](#) of sounds animals produce. Many such words are onomatopoeic, attempting to imitate in simplified form the unique sound that an animal makes to communicate with another.

## PET SOUNDS

Dogs and cats are the animals that humans feel closest to, and we often jump to conclusions about what they are trying to communicate! Dogs typically 'bark' (or 'go woof') perhaps to show [joy](#) or perhaps as a warning. They may also '[growl](#)' to show anger, or '[howl](#)', a long sad sound that they inherited from their ancestors, the wolves, who used it to communicate over long distances. Cats 'meow', a sound used to interact with humans that can have various meanings, or '[purr](#)' as a way to signal comfort.

## BIRD SONG

Birds communicate through a wide variety of melodious sounds. The most frequently used words for them are 'chirp' or '[whistle](#)'. Chirping is to emit short, [sharp](#) sounds, whereas whistling consists of longer ones. Young or small birds also '[tweet](#)', a [weak](#) chirping sound. On a farm, we can hear pigs 'oink', '[snort](#)' or '[grunt](#)', horses 'neigh', sheep 'bleat', cows 'moo', ducks 'quack', hens 'cluck', and roosters 'crow', emitting a morning 'cock-a-doodle-doo' sound.

## WILD ANIMALS

In the wild, owls 'hoot', and frogs or [toads](#) 'croak' or 'go ribbit'. Lions famously 'roar' (this mighty sound can be heard up to eight kilometres away), monkeys

'chatter', elephants 'trumpet' through their [trunk](#), but also '[rumble](#)', a low-frequency sound that they use to interact with other members of their group.

## INSECTS

Species that [lack](#) vocal chords can also communicate. Insects emit a [wide array](#) of sounds called 'stridulations' and '[raspings](#)'. Stridulation results from [rubbing](#) together certain body parts: [grasshoppers](#) and [crickets](#) produce a sound by [scraping](#) their legs with their wings. [Beetles](#) make a rasping sound by [rubbing](#) a body part against a hard surface. Bees produce a distinctive [buzzing](#) sound through their fast wing movements.

## EVOCATIVE

Snakes 'hiss' and '[rattle](#) to warn off' an intruder; hissing happens when air passes through a snake's [windpipes](#); [rattle](#) snakes warn their enemies by vibrating the segments at the end of their tails. Whales, notably [humpback whales](#), communicate through their well-known 'songs', [eerie](#) vocal sequences that can go on for hours, and are apparently produced by a special [voice box](#). Each species of the animal kingdom has a remarkable communication system that reflects the complexity of its social structure. Each sound that an animal makes carries its own meaning, depending on its intention. A sound can express a wide variety of emotions, from excitement to [distress](#) to [contentment](#), and be used in various ways: to signal danger, attract potential mates, assert dominance, or [claim](#) territory. **ANIMAL**

**ITALIAN SOUND ITALIAN** dogs cani **bark** abbaiare cats gatti **meow** miagolare **birds** uccelli **chirp** cinguettare **pigs** maiali **oink** grugnire **horses** cavalli **neigh** nitrire **donkeys** asini **bray** ragliare **sheep** pecore **bleat** belare **cows** mucche **moo** muggire **ducks** anatre **quack** fare qua qua **hens** galline **cluck** chiocciare **roosters** galli **crow** cantare **owls** gufi **hoot** bubolare **frogs** rane **croak** gracidare **lions** leoni **roar** ruggire **monkeys** scimmia **chatter** gridare **elephants** elefanti **trumpet** barrire **snakes** serpenti **hiss** sibilare **whales** balene **sing** cantare

---

# Glossary

- **contentment** = contentezza
- **rumble** = brontolare
- **scraping** = sfregare, raschiare
- **Beetles** = scarabei
- **rattle** = far sbatacchiare
- **voice box** = laringe
- **howl** = ululare
- **humpback whales** = megattera
- **come up** = inventarsi
- **wide array** = ampia varietà
- **grasshoppers** = cavallette
- **rattlesnakes** = serpenti a sonagli
- **sharp** = acuti
- **snort** = sbuffare
- **lack** = mancare di
- **crickets** = grilli
- **whistle** = fischiare
- **rubbing** = strofinare
- **buzzing** = ronzare
- **windpipes** = trachea
- **wide range** = ampia gamma
- **growl** = ringhiare
- **purr** = fare le fusa
- **weak** = debole
- **trunk** = proboscide
- **distress** = angoscia
- **claim** = rivendicare
- **tweet'** = cinguettare
- **grunt** = grugnire
- **toads** = rospi
- **raspings** = suoni striduli
- **to warn off** = avvertire, mettere in guardia
- **joy** = gioia

- **erie** = inquietante