**Dolphins** are [cetacean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cetacean) mammals closely related to [whales](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whale) and [porpoises](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porpoise). There are almost forty species of dolphin in 17 [genera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genus). They vary in size from 1.2 m (4 ft) and 40 kg (90 lb) ([Maui's dolphin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maui%27s_dolphin)), up to 9.5 m (30 ft) and 10 tonnes (9.8 long tons; 11 short tons) (the [orca](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killer_whale) or killer whale). They are found worldwide, mostly in the shallower seas of the [continental shelves](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_shelves) and are carnivores, eating mostly [fish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fish) and [squid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squid). The [family](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Family_%28biology%29) [Delphinidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oceanic_dolphin), the largest in the [order](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_%28biology%29) [Cetacea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cetacea), evolved relatively recently, about ten million years ago during the [Miocene](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miocene).

The name is originally from [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language) δελφίς (*delphís*), "dolphin", which was related to the Greek δελφύς (*delphus*), "womb". The animal's name can therefore be interpreted as meaning "a 'fish' with a womb". The name was transmitted via the [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) *delphinus* (the [romanization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanization) of the later Greek δελφῖνος – *delphinos*]), which in [Medieval Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval_Latin) became *dolfinus* and in [Old French](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_French) *daulphin*, which reintroduced the *ph* into the word. The term **mereswine** (that is, "sea pig") has also historically been used.

The term 'dolphin' can be used to refer to, under the suborder [Odontoceti](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odontoceti), all the species in the family [Delphinidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphinidae) (marine dolphins including orcas and pilot whales) and the river dolphin families [Iniidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iniidae) (South American river dolphins), [Pontoporiidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontoporiidae) (La Plata dolphin), [Lipotidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lipotidae) (Yangtze river dolphin) and [Platanistidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platanistidae) (Ganges river dolphin and Indus river dolphin).[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolphin#cite_note-7)[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolphin#cite_note-Walker2007-8) This term has often been misused in the US, mainly in the fishing industry, where all small [cetaceans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cetacea) (dolphins and [porpoises](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porpoise)) are considered porpoises, while the fish [*dorado*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolphin_fish) is called dolphin fish. In common usage the term 'whale' is used only for the larger cetacean species,while the smaller ones with a beaked or longer nose are considered 'dolphins'. The name 'dolphin' is used casually as a synonym for [bottlenose dolphin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bottlenose_dolphin), the most common and familiar species of dolphin. [Killer whales](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killer_whales) also belong to the family Delphinidae and therefore qualify as dolphins. Though the terms 'dolphin' and 'porpoise' are sometimes used interchangeably, porpoises are not considered dolphins and have different physical features such as a shorter beak and spade-shaped teeth; they also differ in their behavior. Porpoises belong to the family [Phocoenidae](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phocoenidae) and share a common ancestry with the Delphinidae.

A group of dolphins is called a "school" or a "pod". Male dolphins are called "bulls", females "cows" and young dolphins are called "calves". In 1933, three strange dolphins beached off the [Irish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland) coast; they appeared to be [hybrids](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hybrid_%28biology%29) between [Risso's](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Risso%27s_Dolphin) and bottlenose dolphins. This mating was later repeated in captivity, producing a hybrid calf. In captivity, a bottlenose and a [rough-toothed dolphin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rough-toothed_dolphin) produced hybrid offspring. A common-bottlenose hybrid lives at [SeaWorld](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SeaWorld) California. Other dolphin hybrids live in captivity around the world or have been reported in the wild, such as a bottlenose-[Atlantic spotted](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Spotted_Dolphin) hybrid. The best known hybrid is the [wolphin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolphin), a false killer whale-bottlenose dolphin hybrid. The wolphin is a fertile hybrid. Two wolphins currently live at the [Sea Life Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_Life_Park) in [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii); the first was born in 1985 from a male false killer whale and a female bottlenose. Wolphins have also been observed in the wild.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rynvewVe21Y