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| **Bone (outer)** | Cranium and vertebral canal = tough outermost protective layer |
| **Meninges (connective tissue)**   * Outer layer (dura matter) * Middle layer (arachnoid matter) * Inner layer (pia matter) | Tough and fibrous  Loose mesh of fibres  Contains blood vessels that stick closely to the brain and spinal cord |
| **Cerebrospinal fluid (between pia and arachnoid matter)** | Shock absorber, cushions the brain and spinal cord |