

Name _____



How Does a Bear Move?

Bears are powerful animals with strong bodies that allow them to move in different ways. They are not able to fly, but they are excellent runners, climbers, and swimmers. Each type of bear has special ways of moving to help them survive in their natural habitats.

Bears are surprisingly fast runners despite their large size. A brown bear can run up to 35 miles per hour, which is faster than most humans can run! They use their speed to catch prey or escape danger. Their strong legs and large paws help them run on rough terrain like forests and mountains.

Climbing is another skill bears use. Black bears are especially good climbers and can scale trees quickly to find food or avoid predators. They use their sharp claws to grip the bark of trees, making climbing easier.

Bears are also great swimmers. Polar bears, for example, are excellent swimmers and can cover long distances in cold Arctic waters while searching for seals. Their large paws help them paddle, and their thick fur keeps them warm in icy water.

Bears move in a special way called a pacing gait. This means they move their legs on the same side of their body at the same time, instead of alternating sides like most animals. This movement makes them appear to sway when they walk but helps keep their balance on uneven ground.

These different ways of moving help bears survive in the wild by allowing them to find food, escape danger, and explore their environments.