

Name _____



What Does a Cheetah Look Like?

The cheetah is a large, wild cat known for its incredible speed and unique appearance. It has a slim and lightweight body designed for running. Cheetahs usually measure about 4 to 5 feet long, not including their long tail, which adds another 2 to 3 feet. They typically stand about 2 to 3 feet tall at the shoulder.

Cheetahs have a golden-yellow coat covered in small black spots. These spots help them blend into the grassy plains where they live, making it easier for them to stay hidden while hunting. Unlike some other big cats, cheetahs do not have rosettes or stripes, but they do have a special feature called tear marks. These black lines run from the inner corners of their eyes down to the sides of their mouths. Tear marks help reduce glare from the sun, making it easier for cheetahs to see during daytime hunts.

Cheetahs are known for their speed and agility. They have long, powerful legs, a small head, and a flexible spine that allows them to stretch their body while sprinting. Their long tail helps them balance and steer when running fast. An adult cheetah typically weighs between 70 and 90 pounds, making it lighter than other big cats like lions and tigers.

Cheetahs' specialized bodies help them become the fastest land animals, capable of reaching speeds up to 70 miles per hour. However, they can only maintain this speed for short bursts before needing to rest. These unique physical features make the cheetah an extraordinary hunter in the wild.