

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## The Hippopotamus Habitat

The hippopotamus, or hippo for short, is a large, semi-aquatic mammal native to Africa. Hippos are most commonly found in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in countries such as Zambia, Tanzania, and Uganda. They live in areas with plenty of water, like rivers, lakes, and swamps. These water sources are

important because hippos spend most of their time submerged to keep cool under the hot sun.

Hippos prefer habitats with shallow, slow-moving water and nearby grasslands where they can graze at night. During the day, they stay in the water, which helps protect their sensitive skin from the sun. The water also provides a safe space where hippos can rest and stay cool.

Although they spend much of their time in the water, hippos are not fully aquatic. They need access to land for feeding. At dusk, hippos leave the water and walk to nearby grassy areas to graze. They can eat up to 80 pounds of grass in a single night! Hippos are herbivores, meaning they eat only plants, mostly grass.

The perfect habitat for a hippopotamus combines water for cooling and safety with grasslands for feeding. If the water dries up or there isn't enough food, hippos may move to find a better home. Protecting these habitats is important because hippos play a vital role in their ecosystems by spreading nutrients and creating pathways in the water for other animals.