

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## What's on the Menu for a Housefly?

Houseflies are tiny insects with big appetites! They are omnivores, meaning they eat both plants and animals. However, houseflies have very specific eating habits because of how their bodies are built.

Houseflies do not have teeth to chew their food. Instead, they have a special straw-like mouthpart called a proboscis. This allows them to suck up liquids easily. When houseflies find solid food, they use their saliva to break it down into a liquid form before eating it.

Houseflies are not picky eaters. They enjoy a variety of foods, including sugary liquids like juice, fruits, and nectar. They are also attracted to decaying organic matter such as rotting fruits, vegetables, and animal waste. This may sound gross to us, but these foods provide the nutrients flies need to survive. Because of their diet, houseflies are often found near garbage cans, compost piles, and other areas with food scraps.

Houseflies use their strong sense of smell to locate food. Their antennae can detect scents from far away, helping them find meals quickly. Once they land on food, their tiny, hairy feet allow them to taste it before they eat. This means that a housefly knows if food is worth eating just by walking on it!

While houseflies might seem like nothing more than annoying pests, they play an important role in nature. By feeding on decaying matter, they help break it down and recycle nutrients back into the soil. This makes them part of nature's cleanup crew.

So, the next time you see a housefly buzzing around your meal, remember its unusual diet and its role in the ecosystem. Just make sure to cover your food so you don't have to share it!