

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## How Does a Komodo Dragon Reproduce?



Komodo dragons have a fascinating way of reproducing. Mating usually occurs between May and August, when males compete for the attention of a female. These giant lizards can be quite aggressive during mating season. Males wrestle each other, using their tails and claws to push rivals aside. The winner earns the chance to mate with the female.

After mating, the female Komodo dragon carries the fertilized eggs inside her body for about one month before laying them. The female digs a hole in the ground or uses a mound left by another animal to create a safe nest. She lays around 20 eggs at a time, though the number can vary slightly.

The incubation period, or the time it takes for the eggs to hatch, lasts about 7 to 8 months. During this time, the female may guard the nest to protect the eggs from predators. However, once the eggs hatch, baby Komodo dragons are left to fend for themselves. The hatchlings are about 16 inches long and weigh only a few ounces. They climb trees to avoid being eaten by adult dragons and other predators.

Komodo dragons grow slowly and may take up to 8 years to reach full size. Despite being left alone at birth, these reptiles are capable of surviving and thriving due to their natural instincts.