

Skeletons are not scary — they are actually awesome

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Image 1. A human skull from the exhibit Human Skeleton at the Real Bodies exhibition in Sydney, Australia, in 2018. Photo by: Don Arnold/WireImage

Halloween is just around the corner. That means spooky skeletons are everywhere this time of year. This is a good time to learn about skeletons. How much do you really know about the bones underneath your skin?

Bones start growing even before you are born. They start to grow while you are inside your mother's body. They continue to grow after you are born.

Adults have 206 bones in their bodies. Kids have even more. Kids actually have about 300 bone "parts."

Skeletons Grow Until Age 25

You might ask what happens to all those extra pieces. They join together as you age. A person's skeleton can keep growing and joining until they turn 25.

Here is another interesting thing to know. You might see skeletons and think of dead people. The bones inside your body are 100 percent alive, though.

Larger bones like the ones in your hips are hollow. There is space in the middle for something called marrow. It is kind of like jelly. Marrow is where the body creates red and white blood cells. Red blood cells carry oxygen throughout your body. Your body needs oxygen to work. White blood cells kill viruses and bacteria inside your body. Your white blood cells help you fight off colds.

Bone Cells

There are also different kinds of bone cells. There is smooth, hard bone on the outside of all bones. There are also webs of bone strands. Those are inside the tips of many bones.

The largest bone in the whole skeleton is the femur. That bone is in your thigh. The smallest bones are inside your ear.



Did you also know the human skull is not one bone? The human skull is actually a 3-D puzzle. It is made up of 22 bones.

Your fingers and toes have even more than that. Your hands and feet have more bones than the rest of your body. More than half of all the bones in your body are in your hands and feet.

Humans are lucky to have a skeleton. Most animals do not have one. Very few animals have bones beneath their skin. The rest are known as invertebrates. They are animals without a spine.

So do not forget to drink milk with your trick-or-treat candy this Halloween. Your skeleton needs the calcium. Calcium strengthens bones. So take care of your bones by drinking a lot of milk.