

Have I found a fossil?



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Nature
on your
doorstep

Fossil hunting is a fun activity that can be carried out by all the family. Not all marks on rocks are fossils though, and they almost never look like the perfect examples seen in museums. Often you will only see a small part of the fossil exposed.

Find more nature guides or get in touch with our museum scientists for help with identification: museum.wales/collections/on-your-doorstep

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Fossils are usually easily spotted as they tend to form regular patterns or shapes in rocks.



Look for circles, spirals, curved lines, or spots. Mostly you'll only see a small part of the fossil enclosed in rock.



Some rocks have patterns which are not fossils but show where the rock has split or minerals have grown.



Some rocks are covered in tiny holes. These aren't fossils but have been bored by modern sponges or bivalves.



Smooth round rocks are almost never dinosaur eggs, but are rounded pebbles, or 'concretions' where rock formed in lumps.



Hollows in a rock sometimes look like footprints, but mostly they are just where the rock has worn away. Footprints are very rare.



Don't try to hammer out any fossils that are in solid rock as you will only damage them – so please just take a photo.



If you would like us to help identify your fossil, please send us good photos with a pen or coin for scale.



We also need to know where you found it. Keep a notebook of your finds and add a label to each one.