

## Animal Behaviors

Animal behaviors can be grouped into two categories: **innate** v. **learned**. Many behaviors are a mix of both types, such as **social** and **communication** behaviors.

**Innate behaviors:**

- Also known as instinct or inborn behaviors.
- Behaviors that an organism is born knowing how to do; they are not learned.
- Generally they are essential to organism’s survival.
- Determined by the “hard-wiring” of the nervous system, not acquired by practice; usually inflexible (a given stimulus triggering a given response).

**Examples of Innate Behaviors:**

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Suckling	A mammal is born knowing how to nurse (obtain milk from its mother).	
Imprinting	Some baby bird species will follow the first moving object they see, usually the mother.	
Migration	Organisms move from one place to another periodically, generally in response to temperature or food availability.	
Hibernation	An organism goes dormant for a long period of time to escape cold temperatures or starvation.	
Estivation	An organism goes dormant for a long period of time to escape hot temperatures.	
Positive Chemotaxis	An organism responds to a chemical by moving towards it.	
Negative Chemotaxis	An organism responds to a chemical by moving away from it.	
Positive Phototaxis	An organism responds to light by moving towards it.	
Negative Phototaxis	An organism responds to light by moving away from it.	
Circadian Rhythm	Periods of sleep and waking in a 24 hour period.	

**Learned behaviors:**

- Behaviors that are more or less permanently altered as a result of experience.

**Examples of Learned Behaviors:**

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Classical conditioning	Any time an animal learns to make a connection between a certain behavior and a given reward or punishment.	
Trial and error (operant conditioning)	When faced with two choices, an organism can learn to choose the option with the best reward.	
Habituation	An organism learns to ignore a stimulus because it is repetitive and is not providing any valuable information.	

**Social Behaviors:**

- The various ways in which an organism interacts with members of its own species.
- Social behaviors can vary greatly, depending on whether the organisms live together or lead solitary lives (interacting only to reproduce).
- Can be related to courtship/mating, caring for young, defense, feeding, establishing or maintaining territory

**Examples of Social Behaviors:**

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Courtship	An individual performs a ritual – sounds, visual display, pheromones – to attract a mate or strengthen an existing bond	
Territoriality	An organism defending or marking a defined living space	
Parental care	Usually provided by the female, includes e.g., feeding, grooming, defense of young	

**Communication:**

- Occurs when one organism passes along a signal to another, generating a response.

**Examples of Communication:**

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>
Visual Signals	An organism displays defined movements, coloration, or other behavior that can be seen by others	
Sounds	Calls, songs, alarms, language, used for communication	
Chemical Signals (pheromones)	Chemical signals are released and interpreted by others	