



What is an Insect?

Vocabulary words:

Abdomen	Insect	Pupa
Antenna	Larva	Pupae
Antennae	Larvae	Stinger
Compound Eye	Metamorphosis	Thorax
Exoskeleton	Predator	
Gall	Prey	

Some insects that we know are butterflies, ants, honeybees, crickets and flies.

- ✓ Adult insects have six legs.
- ✓ Insect bodies have three parts (head, thorax, abdomen).
- ✓ Insects have one pair of antennae.
- ✓ Insects have an exoskeleton.
- ✓ Adult insects have one or two pairs of wings.
- ✓ Insects lay eggs.
- ✓ Insects are cold blooded.
- ✓ Insects go through metamorphosis. The young insect does not look like the adult insect.
- ✓ A baby insect is called a larva.
- ✓ Some larvae then turn into a pupa before becoming an adult.



What is not an insect?



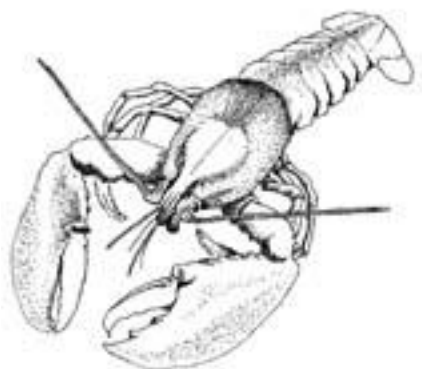
Spiders are not insects. Spiders have eight legs, and two body sections. They have no antennae, and no wings.

Sow bugs are not insects. Sow bugs have fourteen legs, and many body sections. Some people call them 'roly-polies' because some kinds can roll up into a ball.



Centipedes and millipedes are not insects. Centipedes and millipedes can have more than 30 legs, and dozens of body sections.

Worms are not insects. They do not have an exoskeleton, and have many segments.



Crabs and lobsters are not insects. They have too many legs, too many antennae, and no wings.

Some insect babies...

Butterflies lay eggs on the plants their babies like to eat. The eggs hatch into caterpillars, which grow and grow. The caterpillars turn into a pupa, and then into a butterfly.

Flies lay eggs on dead animals. The eggs hatch into maggots. The maggots look gross and smell bad, but they help clean up nature. The maggots will grow into more flies.

Honeybees lay eggs inside their honeycomb, one baby in each tiny six-sided room. The worker bees take care of the baby bee, feeding and cleaning it until it becomes a pupa. When it becomes an adult worker bee, it may get a chance to take care of other babies.

Some tiny wasps lay their eggs inside of a leaf. The leaf makes a ball around the egg. This ball is called a gall. The baby wasp lives inside the gall, safe from other animals and the weather.



There are many kinds of beetles. Baby beetles are called grubs. Some live in the ground, some live in wood, and others are hunters. Ladybird beetle larvae hunt for aphids in gardens.