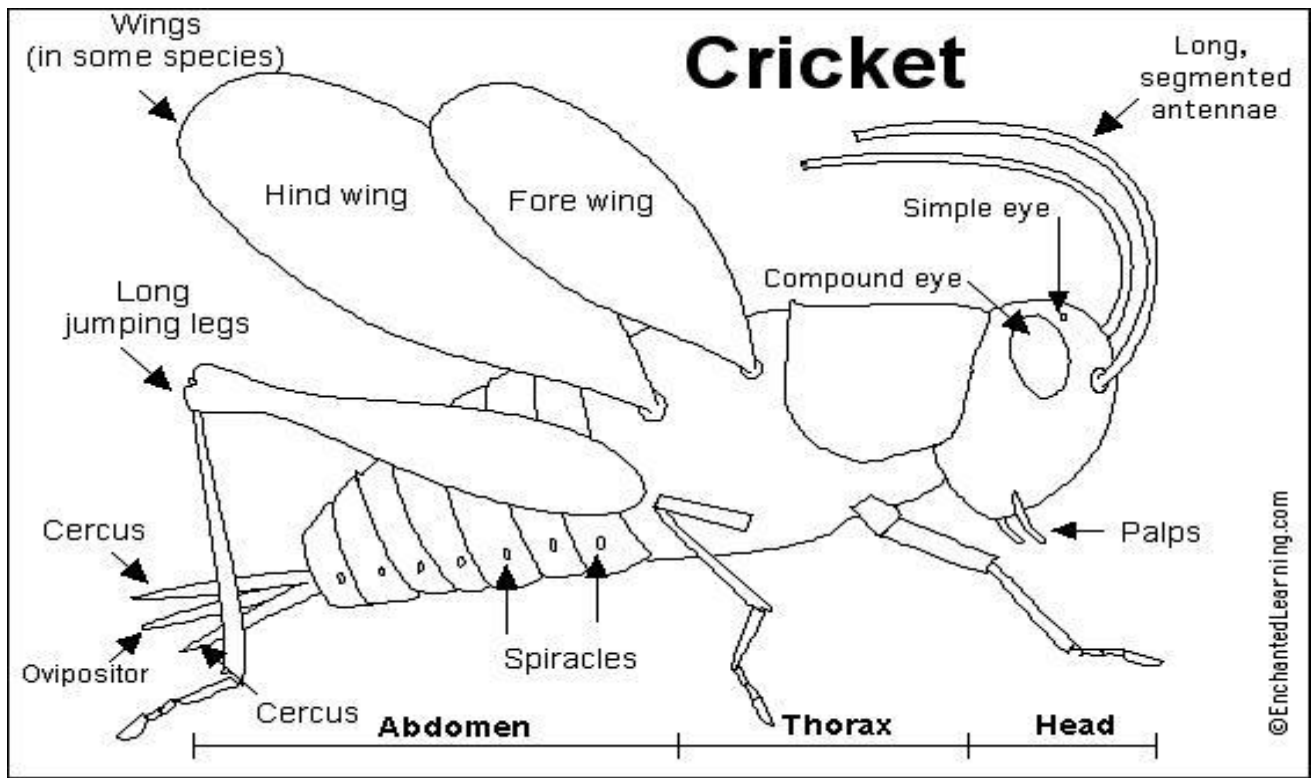


# Anatomy of a Cricket



A cricket is an insect with a hard exoskeleton. There are three sections to a cricket; the head, thorax, and abdomen. Identifying males and females in mature crickets is easy. Females have a long tube called the **ovipositor** extending from the end of the abdomen.

- **Antennae** - These long appendages help the insect feel and smell its surroundings.
- **Compound Eyes** - This pair of eyes has hexagonal (six-sided) lenses and allow the cricket to see in multiple directions.
- **Simple Eyes** - These eyes, called ocelli, have only a single lense. There are three of them and they are used to differentiate between light and dark.
- **Palpi** - These appendages near the mouth aid in feeling and grasping food.
- **Walking Legs** - There are two pairs of these legs and as their name implies they are used for walking.
- **Jumping Legs** - This pair of long legs allow the cricket to jump great distances.
- **Fore Wings** - This pair of wings protects the hind wings.
- **Hind Wings** - These wings are longer and more fragile than the fore wings. Male crickets will rub both pairs of wings together to create their well known chirping sound.
- **Cerci** - These sensory organs help the cricket feel its surroundings.
- **Ovipositor** - This appendage only appears on females and is used to lay eggs. The long organ allows the cricket to protect her eggs by burying them in the ground.
- **Spiracles** - These holes run along the sides of the abdomen. They allow air to enter the tracheal system which then distributes the oxygen throughout the body.

## Fun Facts About Crickets

- ❖ Only male crickets chirp and do so to attract a female mate.
- ❖ Male crickets make their chirping noise by rubbing their wings together.
- ❖ Crickets are usually nocturnal which explains why we hear them at dusk and at night.
- ❖ Crickets are insects and therefore cold blooded. This means they need warm weather to have the energy to chirp. If the weather is too cool their chirping will slow down.
- ❖ Crickets eat their own body weight in food every day. They mainly eat other insects, plants and small fruits and seeds.
- ❖ Crickets can jump 3 feet on average which is about 30 times their body length.
- ❖ Crickets chirp at a different rate depending on the temperature - the higher the temperature the higher the rate.

*To convert cricket chirps to degrees Fahrenheit, count number of chirps in 14 seconds, then add 40 to get temperature.*

Example: 30 chirps + 40 = 70° F

## At Home Activity

Imagine you have a pet cricket. Create a home for your cricket and bring it in to share with the class.