

# Wolves in Packs

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Wolves are in a pack to hunt, raise their pups, and to protect their territory. There are the alphas, and other adult wolves in the pack.



## There are different reasons why wolves live in packs.

Have you ever thought about wolves? Well, if you were a wolf, you will be living in a group called a pack. The pack will be important to you. There are different reasons why wolves live in packs. For example, wolves hunt, raise their pups, and protect their territory in packs.

### Hunting

In a pack, wolves hunt. When they hunt in a pack, they

hunt larger animals than themselves such as deer, elk, and moose. But when they are hunting alone, they hunt animals that are small such as hare, beavers, and birds.

Wolves are known to travel long distances. In a single day, they travel about 12 miles. Wolves in the Arctic travel longer for food than the wolves in the forest. Wolves in the Arctic sometimes travel to hunt without eating any food.

There are leaders of the pack called the alphas. They lead the pack when they hunt. When they hunt an animal, the alphas eat the food first.

Adult wolves hunt between the time the pups leave their den and the next winter.

### Raising their Pups

Wolves also raise their pups in packs. A pup is a young wolf. Most female wolves give birth to six pups. The breeding season

Wolves often eat animals that have died because of starvation and disease. A group of wolves or a pack can hunt large animals, but a wolf only hunts small animals.

for wolves is January – March. But for the wolves in the south, the breeding season will be earlier. Sometimes, alphas are the only members in the pack that have pups. The adult members in the pack help take care of the pups by bringing food and watching the pups. Some pack members help breed the pups while the others hunt. The pregnant female digs the den herself a few weeks before the pups are born.

## **Protecting their Territory**

Wolves are in packs to protect their territory. A territory can be about 50 square miles to over 1,000 square miles. But the territory size depends on the amount of prey and the pup's ages. The territory would be small if there is a lot of prey. The pack will hunt within a territory.

Wolves howl to warn off other packs from their territory. The howl attracts the attention of the pack while communal howls may send territorial messages from one pack to another.

One pack can have about 30 members until some leave to make a new territory. Sometimes, young adults travel long distances to make a new territory.

Wolves live in packs for different reasons. The pack helps the wolves do important things with their members. Wolves hunt, raise their pups, and protect their territory in packs.