

# WHY DO WE SEE SHARKS AS A THREAT?

**Why are we afraid  
of sharks**

**when we are their  
killers?**

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**Sharks only kill  
about 20 humans per  
year!**

Most people are afraid of sharks because of shark attacks they hear about in the news or movies and television shows they watch that show violent attacks by sharks on humans.



*Jaws* is the image we all see when we think about sharks, right? Big sharp teeth that can tear apart our bodies limb to limb. Terrifying! However, although great white sharks like the one in *Jaws* are fierce, it is unlikely one will ever attack you. In fact, humans are more a threat to sharks than they are to us.

## **Why do humans kill sharks?**

Most people kill sharks for food. Shark meat is considered to be delicious and a delicacy in many countries around the world. Shark fin soup is one dish that is very popular in fancy restaurants in a lot of cultures. Hunting sharks and selling their meat is a big industry and people can make a lot of money. Up to 20-23 million sharks are killed each year for food.

Mostly, sharks are killed for their fins. Ever since the 1970's people have been hunting sharks. Can you imagine how many sharks there were before people hunted them? Over 1 billion.

Some people kill sharks for sport. Fisherman think that it's a big deal to catch and kill a shark. Some fishermen sell the shark meat, eat it themselves or just hand the shark on the wall and a trophy.

For whatever reason sharks are killed, human are their only predator.

At the rate we are killing sharks they will soon be extinct. There are over 200 species shark that are endangered. That means half the species of sharks are endangered.

## Who is helping sharks?

Many people all over the world protect sharks because they are endangered and they love sharks.

Most sharks live deep in the ocean so they have a better chance of not seeing a human. Humans are a big threat to sharks. The only reason a shark will attack you is when it senses blood and is scared.

There are many shark preservation societies all over the country who are working to conserve sharks. Even the United States Congress want to help. They passed a law called the Shark Conservation Act in 2009 making it illegal to (according to Wikipedia)

1. remove any of the fins of a shark (including the tail) at sea;
2. to have custody, control, or possession of any such fin aboard a fishing vessel unless it is naturally attached to the corresponding carcass;
3. to transfer any such fin from one vessel to another vessel at sea, or to receive any such fin in such transfer, without the fin naturally attached to the corresponding carcass; or
4. to land any such fin that is not naturally attached to the corresponding carcass, or to land any shark carcass without such fins naturally attached.

It looks like sharks will get the help they need to survive finning and hunting. So, remember, it's ok to be afraid of sharks because they are fearsome. But, they are more afraid of you.

