

DR. DEAN'S

# TOP FOSSIL HUNTING TIPS

MASTERS OF PLAY  
**FESTIVAL**

## PLAN AHEAD

Make sure you do a little background reading before setting off as some areas are protected, which means no hammering or collecting is allowed. This will also help you to know what to expect on the day and what you might find.

## BE PREPARED



Dress suitably for the weather and make sure you and the family all wear strong/durable footwear. If it's cold or rainy, be sure to pack something warm and waterproof, but if it's hot and sunny don't forget the sun cream! Bring some food and drink to keep you going, as well as a bag to put any fossil finds you have in!

## FOSSIL FINDS



Congratulations, you've found a fossil! Wrap it up carefully and make a note of where you found it. If you find a fossil that is too big or fragile to collect, take a photo instead and leave it for others to enjoy. It's important to leave fossils for everyone, so only take your favourite away. Any exciting or unusual finds, make sure to contact your local museum to let them know.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY, DR. DEAN  
RECOMMENDS THAT YOU**

## STAY SAFE

Only travel when COVID-19 restrictions allow and stay clear from dangerous areas like cliffs. If you're at the beach, always make sure you know the tide times and be careful of slippery rocks.

## REMAIN PATIENT

Fossil hunting is a fun, exciting and enjoyable experience, but you must take your time and stay focused. Remember, your most important tools are your eyes, so use them to spot distinct patterns, markings and colours in rocks.

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# **5 UK FOSSIL HOTSPOT FACTS**

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## **WEST ANGLE BAY, PEMBROKESHIRE - CARBONIFEROUS PERIOD, 350 MILLION YEARS OLD**

All of the ancient creatures found at this location were already fossils under the feet of dinosaurs. Many fossils can be found lying in the shingle, including crinoids, bivalves and ancient corals.

## **LYME REGIS, DORSET - JURASSIC PERIOD, 200-190 MILLION YEARS OLD**

One of the most famous fossil hunting grounds in the entire world, Lyme Regis was the home to early pioneering palaeontologist Mary Anning (1799-1847) who discovered many fossils. The skeletal remains of Jurassic seagoing reptiles called ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs, along with lots of squid-like animals can be found here.

## **WHITBY AREA, YORKSHIRE - JURASSIC PERIOD, 180-170 MILLION YEARS OLD**

This stretch of coast is famous for its many squid-like ammonite fossils, along with marine reptiles including crocodile relatives, dinosaur tracks and ancient plants. Growing up in Yorkshire, this is a coastline I know very well and used to collect fossils from various locations around Whitby, my favourite spot being at Saltwick Bay.

## **COMPTON BAY, ISLE OF WIGHT - CRETACEOUS PERIOD, 135-125 MILLION YEARS OLD**

Compton Bay is among the very best places to find dinosaur bones in the UK. Their remains are eroded from the cliffs and isolated bones are occasionally found in the shingle. You can even walk with dinosaurs, as this location is very famous for large dinosaur tracks, which are scattered along the foreshore. Please only take photos of the large footprints as they are protected by the National Trust.

## **ISLE OF SHEPPEY, KENT - PALEOGENE PERIOD, 50 MILLION YEARS OLD**

One of the most productive fossil hunting locations in the UK, a wide variety of fossils can be found here, including turtles, fish remains (including shark teeth), birds, shells, crustaceans (such as lobsters and crabs) and much more. Most of the fossils are small, so be prepared to get on your hands and knees and search the shingle!



# DINO TRACKING

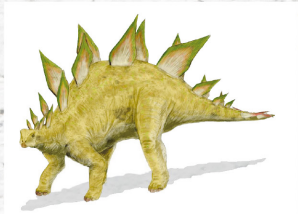
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Dinosaur tracks are important for palaeontologists (dinosaur experts) because they can provide lots of information about the behaviours of dinosaurs.

When studying tracks, palaeontologists are able to work out what type of dinosaur made them, if the dinosaur was walking alone or in a group, whether the track was made by the front feet (hands) or the back feet, or even how fast it was moving.

## CAN YOU MATCH THE DINOSAUR TO THEIR FOOTPRINT?



STEGOSAURUS



TYRANNOSAURUS



IGUANODON



DIPLODOCUS



VELOCIRAPTOR

A.



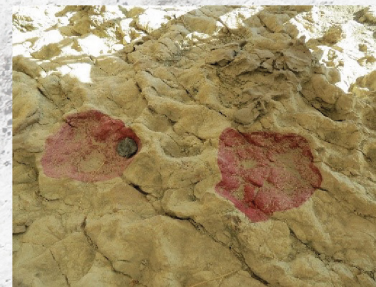
B.



C.



D.



E.

