

ABALONE

Scientific Name:
Haliotis tuberculata

Key Information

The abalone is a type of sea snail with a beautiful, flat shell shaped like an ear. Its shell is often covered in algae on the outside, but inside it hides a stunning surprise: a shiny, rainbow-colored surface called mother-of-pearl!

Most abalone in Europe belong to the species *Haliotis tuberculata* (also known as the green or European abalone), and they grow up to 10–12 cm, though some get a bit bigger.



Abalone outside
Photo by Meet the Sea

Food

Abalones are herbivores, they feed mostly on algae and seaweed, especially kelp. They use a rasping tongue (called a radula) to scrape algae off rocks.



Abalone inside
Photo by Meet the Sea

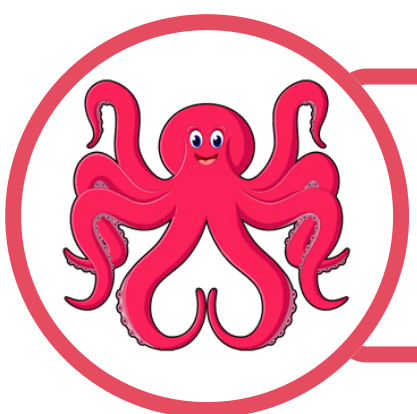
Curoisities

Abalones breathe through a row of tiny holes along the edge of their shell. These are not damage, but special openings that help water flow over their gills!

Their beautiful shells have been used in jewelry and decorations for centuries—and they're also considered a delicacy in some cultures.

Habitat

Abalones live along rocky coastlines, especially in areas with lots of seaweed. They attach themselves tightly to rocks using a strong foot, and they're often hidden under algae or in crevices in shallow, coastal waters.



Meet the Sea
Education & Entertainment at Sea