

Is this an open and shut case?

BIVALVES are a special group of molluscs that include oysters, mussels, scallops and calms.

This means that their soft bodies are protected by a **two-part hinged shell** made from calcium carbonate. The two parts of the shell are **held together by a muscle** that allows the animal to open and close its shell.



Bivalve shells washed up on a Perth beach.

Which ones have you found before?

Bivalves **make their own shells**. An internal organ called the **mantle secretes calcium carbonate** so that as the "inner" part of the animal grows, the outer shell grows too.

When the animal feeds, it opens the two halves of the shell. Many bivalves **filter their food** from the water, **trapping food in the mucus on their gills**. If the bivalve is exposed to the air by a change in water level, or when it is attacked by a predator, it closes shut.

When the bivalve dies or is eaten, the two parts of its hinged shell usually separate and can be found washed up on our beaches.

ACTIVITY 1. Learning the lingo

INSTRUCTIONS: Find out the meaning of these words:

- Mollusc
- Bivalve
- Mantle
- Filter
- Secretes
- Gills
- Predator
- Calcium carbonate

ACTIVITY 2. Bivalve Match Up

INSTRUCTIONS: Find the shell halves that match, then colour the pairs in identical colours.



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