

THE MEGALODON

SAY "AHHHHHHH!"

The Megalodon is the largest shark that ever lived. Roaming the oceans roughly 23 - 3.6 million years ago, it had a powerful bite with a jaw full of teeth as large as a human's hand.



Source: nationalgeographic.com

Megalodon tooth



When scientists find the remains of an ancient shark, they really only find jaws and teeth. This is because sharks' bodies are made up of mostly cartilage, which decomposes and leaves no remains. The image to the left shows a scientist holding the jaws of a Great White Shark standing in the reconstructed jaws of a Megalodon.

If you found a tooth the size of the picture above on the right, how big do you think the shark would be?

Write your guess here

HOW BIG WAS THE MEGALODON?

The Megalodon was a massive shark. Since their cartilage bodies don't leave fossils for scientists to study, our only estimate of a megalodon's body length is based upon known relationships between other shark species' tooth size and body length.

Great White Tooth



1.8 inches

Megalodon Tooth



5.8 inches

Fast Facts

Type: Fish

Diet: Carnivore

Size: 15 ft (4.6 m) to more than 20 ft (6 m)

Weight: 5,000 lbs (2,268 kg) or more

Group name: School or shoal

Protection status: Endangered

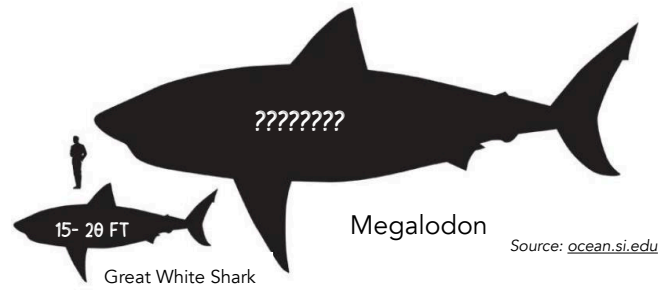
Size relative to a bus:



*USE THIS INFORMATION TO COMPLETE THE TABLE ON THE NEXT PAGE

MEGALODON MATH

In math we use *ratios* to compare values. Complete the data table below using the information on the bottom of page 1.



	TOOTH LENGTH (IN)	LENGTH OF SHARK
GREAT WHITE SHARK		
MEGALODON		x

x = the length of a Megalodon shark

If we are assuming that the tooth size of the Great White is *proportional* to the tooth size of the Megalodon, we can use the information about the length of the Great White to calculate the approximate length of a Megalodon.

What is the ratio of the
Great White tooth length : Great White length?

What is the ratio of the
Megalodon tooth length : Megalodon length (x)?

Now, use these two ratios to calculate the missing length of a Megalodon.

Check your work here!



Was your guess on page 1 correct?

Explain.