

Elephant FAMILIES

The family group is called a herd. A herd is made of all the mother elephants and their babies. There might be six to 12 members in a family. Female elephants stay in the herd forever. Male elephants leave between the ages of 7 and 12. They live alone or in small herds of males. Elephants can live for about 60 years.



Taking Care of Baby

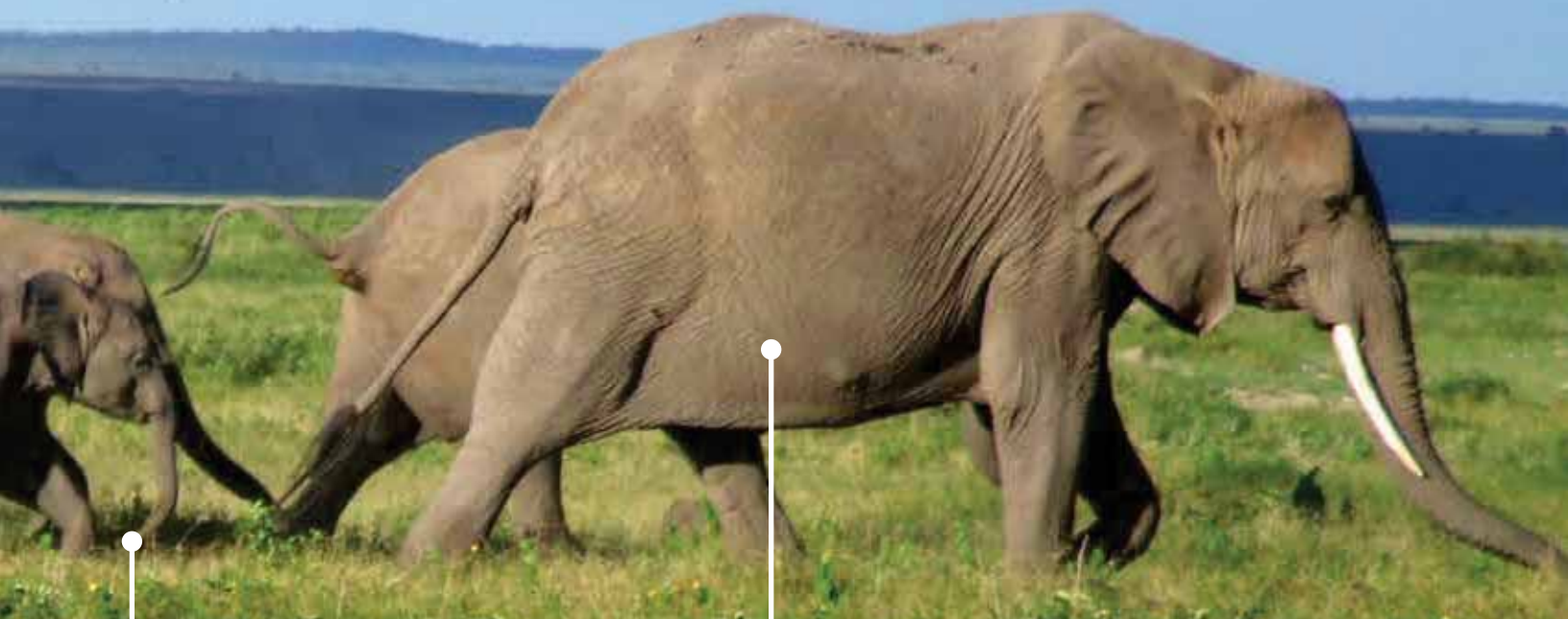
A baby elephant is called a calf. Calves stay close to their mothers. They drink their mother's milk for at least two years. The calf likes to be touched often by its mother or a relative. This gives the baby comfort.

Growing Up

Baby elephants are three feet tall and weigh 250 pounds when they are born. Calves play. They bump into each other. They chase each other and pull tails. Calves learn by watching and doing what older elephants do.

Family members help each other. Adults teach young females how to care for their babies. The females learn by babysitting babies of different mothers.

The family also works together to protect their young. Elephants care for their families, just as we do.



Carry that Trunk!

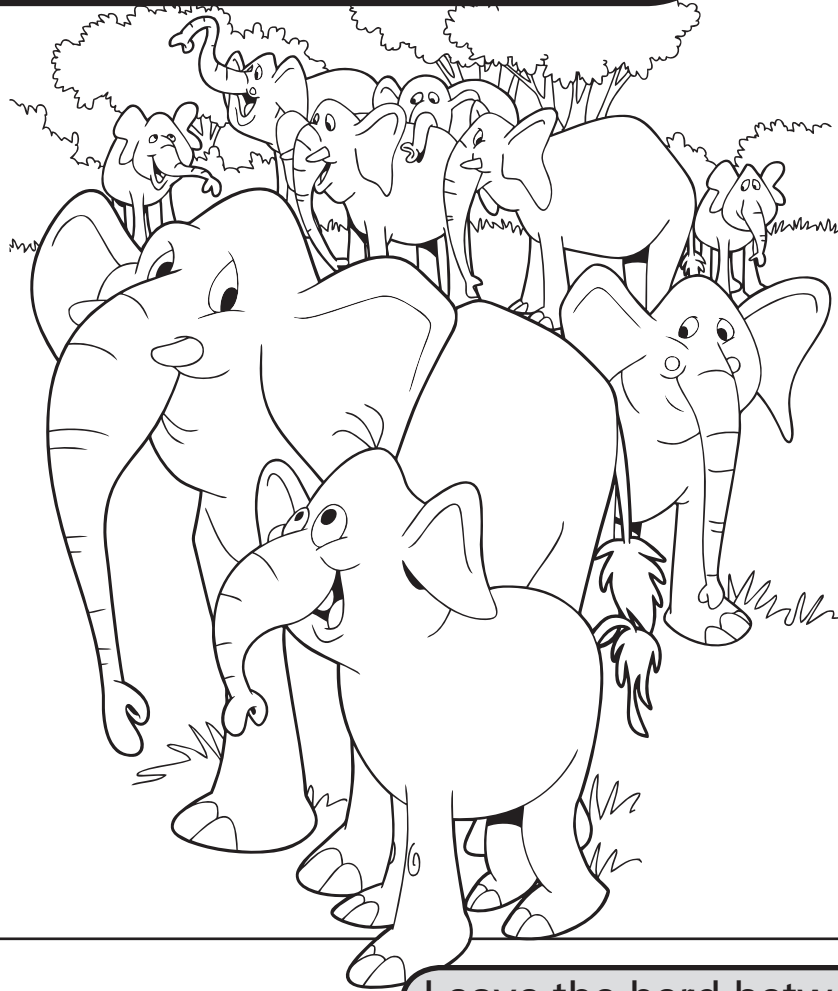
A calf sometimes sucks its trunk like a human baby sucks its thumb. At first it swings its trunk around wildly. It may even step on its own trunk!

Mom Knows Best.

The oldest and largest mother is the leader. She is called the matriarch. The herd walks in a line behind her. When she stops to rest, eat, or drink, the herd stops too. The matriarch keeps the herd safe.

The Elephant Family

Colour the picture showing the elephant family. Then match the word to the correct description of it.



Matriarch ●

Herds ●

Females ●

Males ●

Calves ●

● Leave the herd between the ages of 7 and 12

● Stay in their herds for life

● Family groups

● Baby elephants

● The oldest mother and leader of the herd