

The tallest land animals in the world

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Animals around the world have evolved over centuries to reach heights that suit their needs—and for animals like giraffes and brown bears, that ideal height is pretty high.

In some cases, height seems to have been driven by the need to reach protein-rich leaves in trees. In other cases, escaping predators has led animals to evolve longer legs. Other explanations for the evolution of animal height include heat dissipation in more tropical climates, the need for space to efficiently digest large amounts of vegetation, etc.

1. Giraffe

The giraffe is the tallest land mammal in the world, with an average height of 426.72cm – 579.12cm. The name of this animal comes from its very long neck, about 243.84cm. Giraffes also have very long legs, about 182.88cm.



Despite their large size, giraffes have excellent eyesight and powerful rear kicks. Giraffes have an average lifespan of 10 to 15 years in the wild.

2. Elephant



Coming in second in the height contest is the African bush elephant (*Loxodonta africana*). Males of this species weigh around 6,100 kg and are between 320.04 cm and 396.24 cm tall.

3. Ostrich



This bird has a long neck and long legs, so it can reach an average height of 201.168cm. Thanks to its long legs, the ostrich can reach a speed of 64km/h, fast enough to escape most predators.

4. Bear



The brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), sometimes called the grizzly bear, stands about 152.4cm tall when walking on all fours, but when standing on its hind legs, it can reach a height of 243.84cm – 274.32cm. At such a size, the grizzly bear is one of the largest carnivores on the planet.

5. Elk



American elk are herbivores, consuming about 19kg of food per day, usually twigs, roots and some aquatic plants. Male elk average 228.6cm in height.

6. Camel



The tallest of the camel species is the dromedary (also known as the Arabian camel – *Camelus dromedarius*). Male dromedary camels are about 179.832cm – 201.168cm tall. Their hump on their back stores about 36 kg of fat.

7. Horse



The Shire is a tall horse breed, standing at around 163cm for mares and 173cm for stallions. There are only about 2000 Shire horses left and they are on the brink of extinction.

8. Bison



Last on the list of the 8 tallest animals in the world is the American bison (*Bison bison*). When standing on all fours, the male of this species is about 170cm tall.

9. Rhinoceros



According to Rhino Conservation Botswana, the white rhino is the second largest land animal after the elephant. It can stand nearly 6 feet (1.8 meters) tall at the shoulder and weigh up to 7,700 pounds (3,492.7 kg).

White rhinos communicate by huffing and panting, and are known to mark their territory with large piles of dung.

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