



FUN FACTS ABOUT FERNs



FERNs SENSE LIGHT

Fern fronds can bend and grow toward sunlight, opening up a little more each day.

NO FLOWERS NEEDED

Unlike most plants you see in a garden, ferns never grow flowers or seeds.

A COILED BEGINNING

Every fern frond starts out as a tightly coiled fiddlehead before slowly unrolling.

THOUSANDS OF SPECIES

There are close to 12,000 different kinds of ferns living all around the world.



UNDERWATER SWIMMERS

During fertilization, a fern's male reproductive cells actually swim through a thin film of water to reach the egg cell.



SHADE LOVERS

Most ferns thrive in shady, moist places like forest floors, where sunlight is scarce.



TINY BEGINNINGS

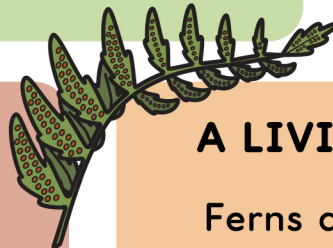
A new fern plant starts its life as a dust-sized spore, far too small to see without a magnifying glass.

SOME ARE EDIBLE

Certain fiddleheads, like those from the ostrich fern, are picked and cooked as a springtime vegetable in some regions.

TWO PLANTS IN ONE LIFE

A fern's life cycle includes two very different-looking stages: a tiny heart-shaped stage and the leafy fern most people recognize.



A LIVING FOSSIL GROUP

Ferns are one of the oldest groups of plants still growing on Earth today.