# Six Characteristics of Living Organisms



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Chris Dinesen Rogers has been online marketing for more than eight years. She has grown her own art business through SEO and social media and is a consultant specializing in SEO and website development. Her past work experience includes teaching pre-nursing students beginning biology, human anatomy and physiology. Rogers's more than 10 years in conservation makes her equally at home in the outdoors.

By Chris Dinesen Rogers, eHow Contributor

While life itself eludes a concrete definition, certain characteristics distinguish living organisms from non-living. There are, of course, many variations upon these broad themes.

1. Responsiveness

* A living organism must be able to detect and respond to external and internal stimuli or stresses in order to evolve and adapt.

1. Movement

* All living organisms move, whether it be physical movement of the body or movement of cells, organelles or organs within the body itself.

1. Growth

* Living organisms are not static beings, but are capable of growth to increase in size or complexity.

1. Differentiation

* Differentiation is a life process where cells will develop and differentiate into specialized cells that carry on certain functions of the body, taking on specialized structural and functional characteristics.

1. Reproduction

* Living organisms reproduce. Reproduction refers not just to the act of reproducing, but also the cells' ability to reproduce in order to grow or repair tissue.

1. Metabolism

* To live, all organisms must have a system of metabolism that provides the energy for life and uses the energy.