# 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.

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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.