

Furry Friends

If you were thinking that coyotes look similar to dogs, then you probably won't be surprised to learn that they are in the same family as dogs, foxes, and wolves. Similar to many dogs, coyotes have long, narrow **snouts** and pointy ears. Their bodies are lean and most are covered in some combination of gray, white, tan, or brown fur. Although the color of their fur varies, coyotes can usually be easily identified by their bushy, black-tipped tails.





Don't let their cute faces fool you! Coyotes are actually first-rate hunters. Their keen sense of smell, when combined with excellent vision and hearing, makes them strong predators.





MOM AND DAD
LOOK FOR FOOD WHILE
THE PUPS PLAY NEAR
THE DEN.



Family Life

On the prairie or in the city, coyotes live in packs. A pack is usually made up of a mother, a father, and their pups. Unlike wolves, coyotes hunt mostly alone. But raising babies is a group effort.

During the winter, a coyote pair works together to dig a cozy **den** under rocks or in a hillside. In spring, Mom settles in and gives birth to her pups—usually around six, but sometimes as many as ten! Mom nurses the pups, but Dad helps out, too. He brings food to his mate. Once the pups are a little older, he brings back “baby food”: chewed up bits of meat.



By summer, the family members leave the den. But they will often stay together much longer. If a youngster grows up and doesn't find a mate right away, it may even help its parents take care of their new pups. All that loving care gives the pups a better shot at making it to adulthood. That might be clever coyotes' best trick of all: working together to survive.