

Fish Family Characteristic Cards

Cut out these cards to have as a quick guide for the different fish families.

Family Cyprinidae: Minnows

- Single dorsal fin
- No true spines in fins
- Mouth at end of snout
- Small body lacking spots
- Abdominal pelvic fins
- Lateral line easy to see
- Schooling: always with mixed species

Family Percidae: Perches + Darters

- Two dorsal fins: first with sharp spines, second with soft rays
- Torpedo shaped body
- Thoracic pelvic fins
- Lateral line straight and easy to see
- Dart along the bottom of streams
- Schooling: mostly solitary or in pairs

Family Centrachidae: Sunfish + Bass

- Two dorsal fins
- Large, flat deep body (like a squished pan) or rounded thick body
- Shallow forked caudal fin
- Terminal or slightly superior mouths
- Can have "ear flap"
- Schooling: solitary

Family Fundulidae: Topminnows

- One dorsal fin located on far back of body (posterior)
- Spineless fins
- Superior mouth
- No lateral line
- Flat head and back
- Schooling: swim near surface of water