

Compare and contrast – Lions and Tigers

Two of the very largest animals found in the animal kingdom, these ancient, vicious carnivores rule their respective lands yet both also lead very different lives. This report will explain the similarities and differences between these wonderful animals.





Habitat

Both tigers and lions like to live near water, it's essential that they can get a drink whenever they need one! Despite this, tigers vastly prefer rainforests and wet grasslands, whereas Lions are much more likely to populate dry, barren habitats. Tigers tend to live predominantly in the vast jungles of Asia, whereas the majority of lions live in the dry heat of central Africa. In fact, tigers are extremely sensitive to heat, and try to avoid direct sunlight whenever possible. One huge difference between the two is that Lions live in prides (packs of lions) and work together to kill their prey. In contrast, tigers are extremely solitary animals, far preferring to live and hunt on their own. Tigers hunt for their own prey in the jungle, and then eat their catch alone. Therefore, one can say that lions are definitely more sociable than tigers.

Physical characteristics



The physical characteristics also differ between lions and tigers. Tigers are longer than lions, more muscular, and generally heavier in weight, although lions are taller than tigers. Tigers have stronger, tougher legs, and are much more active and agile when compared to lions. By nature, tigers are considered to be more aggressive and highly active. In contrast, male lions are even thought to be lazy in a way, and will not do anything unless they really have to! Tigers are the more dominant big cat when lions and tigers are compared. Even in several cases where their genes have been mixed, the genes of the tiger have proven to be more prominent than the lion's genes!

	Lion	Tiger
		
Binomial (Latin) Name:	Panthera Leo	Panthera Tigris
Family:	Cat	Cat
Weight:	330-430 pounds (male) 250-350 pounds (female)	488 pounds (average male) 308 pounds (average female)
Distinctive feature:	A mane ranging in color from tan to black	Stripes all over the body
Litter Size:	Avg. 1 - 6	Avg. 2 - 4
Speed:	50 miles per hour	37 miles per hour
Teeth and Jaws:	Very sharp teeth with a good amount of jaw pressure	Wide mouth that has strong teeth
Hunting:	Most females hunt together in daytime, males help rarely.	hunts alone during night (nocturnal)
Avg. Meat required for food:	11 - 15.4 lbs also 57 for large males	14 - 16 lbs but sometimes 66 lbs for Amur (Siberian)Tiger
Main Prey:	Medium to large ungulates, most notably zebra, wildebeest, impala, warthog, hartebeest and waterbuck	Large animals such as deer, buffalo and wild pigs, but they will also hunt fish, monkeys, birds, reptiles and sometimes even baby elephants. Occasionally, tigers kill leopards, bears and other tigers.They also hunt Gaur and Indian Rhinos.
Other food sources:	Opportunistic and will readily scavenge the kills of cheetahs, leopards, wild dogs and hyenas.	Will strictly eat only meat hunted by self. When old, will depend on either smaller preys requiring less effort or on other tigers of the pack.
Brain size:	Has the largest brain out of all the big cats except the tiger.	Largest brain and reaches maturity faster than other big cats. Their brain is 25% larger than a lions.
Habitat:	Rich grasslands of East Africa to sands of Kalahari Desert, South Sahara to South Africa, excluding the Congo rain forest and India's Gir forest. Lions like to live in open woodlands and thick bush, scrub, and tall grassy areas.	India to Siberia and South East Asia. They are also found in grassland and swamp margins. They require sufficient cover, a good population of large prey and a constant water supply.
Population Status:	Asiatic - endangered, Others - vulnerable	Critically Endangered
Life Span:	Avg. 12 years in the wild for males and 15-16 years in the wild for females.	Avg. 15 - 20 Years
Sexual Maturity of Cubs:	24 - 28 Months in Captivity; 36 - 46 Months in Wild	24 - 28 Months in Captivity; 36 - 46 Months in Wild
Body Length (mm):	2200 - 3000 (2.2 - 3 meters)	2000 - 3300 (2 - 3.3 meters)
Tail (mm):	700 - 1000	600 - 1100
Reproduction:	Females will give birth after a gestation period of 100-110 days	Females will give birth after a gestation of 104 days
Mother nurses cubs for:	10 - 12 Months	18 - 24 Months
Coloring:	coat: tan tail fur/mane:dark brown	orange with brown-black stripes
Diet:	carnivore	carnivore