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Biology

From cells to anatomy, from evolution to genetics, explore the classification, characteristics, and processes of life and how they change over time.

Editor's Selection of the Month

Sputnik

October marks the 50th anniversary of the launch of Sputnik 1, the Soviet satellite that was the first craft to be put in orbit around the Earth. Sputnik 1's launch on October 4, 1957, initiated the space race between the Soviet Union and the United States. Read about the Sputnik program and its impact on the development of spacecraft and space exploration programs.

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pear ← **sample essay**

Kingdom: Plantae
Division: Magnoliophyta
Class: Magnoliopsida
Order: Rosales
Family: Rosaceae
Genus: *Pyrus*

From: Facts On File, Inc.



A bell-shaped or globular fruit that grows on a leaf-shedding tree. The pear tree grows about 45 feet (14 m) tall. It has pointed, oval leaves and showy clusters of white blossoms. The pear is closely related to the [apple](#) and [quince](#).

The fruit is a pome: only the core, containing small black seeds, is the true fruit; the fleshy, **edible** part is formed from the stalk. Tiny stone **cells** are present throughout the flesh of a tree-ripened pear. These **cells** give the fruit a gritty texture. Grittiness is avoided by picking pears when they are green (before stone **cells** develop fully) and ripening the fruit in storage. Ripe pears are sweet and juicy.

Pears are used chiefly in desserts and salads. They are sold fresh or canned; canned pears are sometimes spiced.

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