



Gator or Croc? Field Card

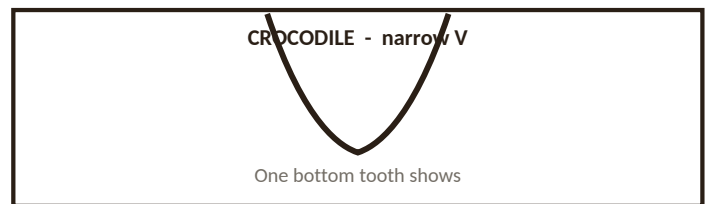
Tell the two apart in the wild - or in a photograph.

Name _____

Date _____

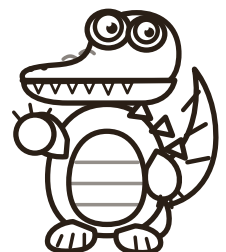
Look at	ALLIGATOR	CROCODILE
Snout shape	Wide and rounded, like the letter U	Narrow and pointy, like the letter V
Teeth showing	Only the top teeth show when the mouth is shut	One big bottom tooth sticks out on each side
Colour	Very dark grey or almost black	Lighter olive green or tan
Water	Fresh water: swamps, rivers and marshes	Can live in salty water near the sea
Where in the USA	All across the southeast	Only the very south tip of Florida

The quickest check: look at the snout



Worth knowing

- Alligators and crocodiles are both crocodylians - an animal family older than the first birds.
- South Florida is the only place in the world where wild alligators and wild crocodiles live side by side.
- A closed mouth is the quickest clue: if you can only see top teeth, you are looking at an alligator.





Field Test

Write G for alligator or C for crocodile beside each one.

Name _____

Date _____

☐

1. You see a reptile with a wide, rounded snout in a freshwater swamp in Louisiana.

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2. A reptile in a salty mangrove bay has one big bottom tooth showing on each side.

☐

3. This animal is dark, almost black, and is resting in a marsh.

☐

4. This animal has a narrow, pointed snout the shape of a V.

Draw it

In the box below, draw the snout of an alligator and label the one clue you would use to identify it from a photograph.

Gator or Croc? - Field Test answers

- 1. Alligator** You see a reptile with a wide, rounded snout in a freshwater swamp in Louisiana.
- 2. Crocodile** A reptile in a salty mangrove bay has one big bottom tooth showing on each side.
- 3. Alligator** This animal is dark, almost black, and is resting in a marsh.
- 4. Crocodile** This animal has a narrow, pointed snout the shape of a V.

Teaching note

The closed-mouth tooth test is the most reliable field mark and the one worth drilling: an alligator's wider upper jaw hides the lower teeth, while a crocodile's fourth lower tooth stays visible. Colour and size are unreliable - both vary with age, water and light.