

How Many MICE Make an ELEPHANT?

You have probably already noticed that elephants are very big and mice are very small. In fact, African elephants are the biggest land animal in the world. But how many mice could you fit into one of these hefty, trumpeting stompers?

This little house mouse takes up around **40 cubic centimetres** of space or **0.00004 cubic metres**.

This enormous African elephant takes up around **six million cubic centimetres** of space, or **six cubic metres**.

TO WORK IT OUT

Divide six million (6,000,000) by 40. (Or divide 6 by 0.00004 if you'd rather use cubic metres). Either way the result is the same.

You'd need 150,000 mice to fill up the space of just one elephant!

How small is a mouse?

AVERAGE WEIGHT
about 25 grams

AVERAGE LENGTH
about 8 cm (body)
about 7 cm (tail)

How big is our elephant?

WEIGHT
about 6 tonnes, or 6,000,000 grams

HEIGHT
about 3.3 metres

Even though they're tiny, house mice can jump up to 45 cm high. That's like you leaping up to the roof of a house. Elephants can't jump at all – they never have all four feet off the ground at the same time.

An elephant uses its trunk for lots of things, including sniffing, picking things up, digging, sucking up water to drink, sucking up mud or sand for a bath, and giving other elephants a cuddle. The trunk has more than 40,000 muscles to help it do all these jobs. 23 house mice could line up along an African elephant's trunk.

You could wrap yourself up inside an elephant's ear, which can measure two metres across – as long as the elephant didn't mind, of course.

There are *billions* of house mice in the world, but not so many African elephants. Today there are about 415,000 African elephants in the wild, but 100 years ago there were more than three million of them.

How many steps to the top of MOUNT EVEREST?

Grab your crampons and an ice pick, because it's time to scale the highest mountain in the world. Obviously, it would be a lot easier if there were stairs to climb to the top, but how many flights would we need?

Mount Everest is 8,848 m high.

Most flights of stairs in a house are 3 m high.

We would need 2949 FLIGHTS OF STAIRS (plus a few steps) to climb Mount Everest!

TO WORK IT OUT

Divide 8,848 by 3

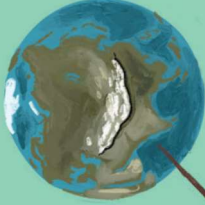
May and June are the only months that weather allows climbers to reach Everest's summit, and sometimes there's a long queue of mountaineers waiting to get there!

Here is the highest peak on each continent, along with the number of flights of stairs needed to climb it. Australia's Mount Kosciuszko is just a hill compared to Everest!

1. ASIA: Mount Everest 8848 m (2949 flights of stairs)
2. SOUTH AMERICA: Aconcagua 6962 m (2320 flights of stairs)
3. NORTH AMERICA: Denali 6190 m (2063 flights of stairs)
4. AFRICA: Mount Kilimanjaro 5895 m (1965 flights of stairs)
5. EUROPE: Mount Elbrus 5642 m (1880 flights of stairs)
6. ANTARCTICA: Vinson Massif 4892 m (1630 flights of stairs)
7. AUSTRALIA: Mount Kosciuszko 2228 m (742 flights of stairs)

All five of the world's highest mountains are found in the Himalaya mountain range, which includes more than 50 mountains that are higher than 7,200 meters, and ten over 8,000 metres.

Mount Everest was climbed for the first time in 1953 (at least, the first time it was recorded). Since then there have been more than 7,000 ascents, and there are hundreds more every year.



The Himalayas formed when two massive plates in the Earth's crust collided with one another, joining India, which used to be a very big island off the coast of Australia, with Asia. India drifted slowly northwards until it crashed into Asia about 40 to 50 million years ago.