



Iguanodon Fact Sheet

Common Name: Iguanodon bernissartensis

Scientific Name: Bernissart's iguana tooth

Wild Status: Cretaceous Period, 126-125 MYA

Habitat: North America, Portugal

Country: Countries in North America, and Portugal

Shelter: Unknown

Life Span: Unknown

Size: 33 feet long, 10 feet tall at the hips, 3 tons

Details

Iguanodon was the second [dinosaur](#) ever discovered. Gideon Mantell came up with the name due to the fact the animal's teeth resembled those of the modern [iguana](#). The most distinguishing feature of *Iguanodon* is the large [spike](#) located on the [thumb](#). Early depictions placed this structure on the animal's nose. The exact function of the spike is unknown but it is believed to have been a weapon used to defend the animal from predators or possibly to compete with rival *Iguanodon*. Animals like *Iguanodon* represent a transitional form of ornithomimid in between the small, swift-running hypsilophodontids that appeared in the mid [Jurassic](#) and the crested hadrosaurs of the Cretaceous.

Cool Facts

- Over the years, there has been much debate of the posture of *Iguanodon*. When first discovered and believed to be a [lizard](#), it was depicted with stumpy legs and a dragging tail. Upon realizing that the forelimbs were noticeably shorter than the

hind limbs, the view changed that animal was a biped that used its tail to help keep itself upright much like a [kangaroo](#). However, to achieve a tripodal position would require the animal to break its own tail.

- The hands are poorly built for grasping or manipulating food and end in hooflike nails.
- Coupled with a robust pectoral girdle built to bear weight, it is now known that *Iguanodon* spent most of its time in a [quadrupedal](#) posture with legs directly underneath the body and tail raised off the ground, although it could locomote on two legs if it needed to.

Taxonomic Breakdown

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Ornithischia

Family: Iguanodontidae

Genus: *Iguanodon*

Species: *I. bernissartensis*

Conservation & Helping

The *Iguanodon* is currently extinct, and was believed to exist 126 - 125 Million Years Ago

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