

Why do sheep stay together and follow each other?

Sheep have a strong **instinct** to follow the leader. When one sheep decides to go somewhere, the rest of the flock usually follows, even if it is not a good decision. For example, if the lead sheep jumps over a cliff, the others are likely to follow. Even from birth, lambs are conditioned to follow the older members of the flock

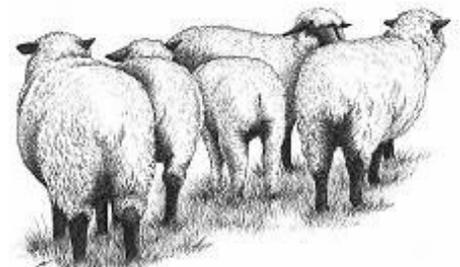
There is a certain strain of sheep in Iceland known as leadersheep. Leadersheep are highly intelligent animals that have the ability and **instinct** to lead a flock home during difficult conditions. They have an exceptional ability to **sense** danger. There are many stories in Iceland of leadersheep saving many lives during the fall roundups when blizzards threatened shepherds and flocks alike.

Sheep are **gregarious**. They will stay together in a group when grazing. A sheep will become agitated if it is separated from the group. They are social animals and when sheep are grazing they must be able to maintain a visual link with at least four or five other sheep. All sheep have a **flocking instinct** to some extent. It is the sheep's **flocking instinct** that allows sheep herders to look after large numbers of sheep and lambs.

Sheep are **prey** animals. It is **flocking** together in large groups that protect sheep from **predators** because predators will go after the outliers in the flock. Sheep have excellent **senses**. Their wide angle of vision allows them to see **predators**. They can direct their ears to the direction of sound. They are very sensitive to what different **predators** smell like.

Match the definition to the word

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| (1) Instinct | (A) Animal that hunts and kills other animals for its food. |
| (2) Gregarious | (B) Behaviors which do not need to be learned and help an animal survive. |
| (3) Senses | (C) Tending to form a group and be sociable with others of the same kind. |
| (4) Predator | (D) Any of the faculties, as sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch. |
| (5) Flocking | (E) An animal that is killed and eaten by other animals. |
| (6) Prey | (F) The tendency to stay in a group. |



© ABC/Clare 2001

1-B, 2-C, 3-D, 4-A, 5-F, 6-E