

muscles that move you

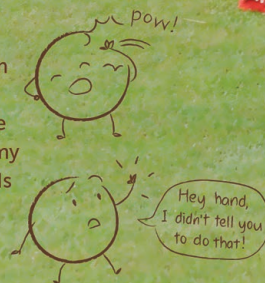
When you run, jump, swing, or throw a ball, you're using your muscles. In fact, you're using a special type of muscles: **skeletal muscles**.

What are skeletal muscles?

Skeletal muscles are muscles that connect to your bones and help you move around.

These muscles are special in two ways!

- 1 Skeletal muscles only move when you tell them to move. Have you ever had your arm fling up and bop you on the head on its own? Probably not, because to make those muscles move, you have to think, "I want my hand to hit my head." Your brain then sends that message to your muscles and — bop!



- 2 Skeletal muscles (usually) work in pairs — like a buddy system inside your body. **The muscles take turns pulling in and stretching out to make your bones move.** How does this work? Take a closer look at what happens when you flex your arm!

The muscle on top (*your biceps*) tenses up and pulls on your arm bones. At the same time, the muscle on the bottom (*your triceps*) relaxes and stretches out to let your arm move up.

When you want to lower your arm, the opposite happens. The biceps relaxes and stretches out, while the triceps tenses and pulls.

So the next time you pick up your backpack, play a game of tag, or throw a ball, you can thank your skeletal muscles!

