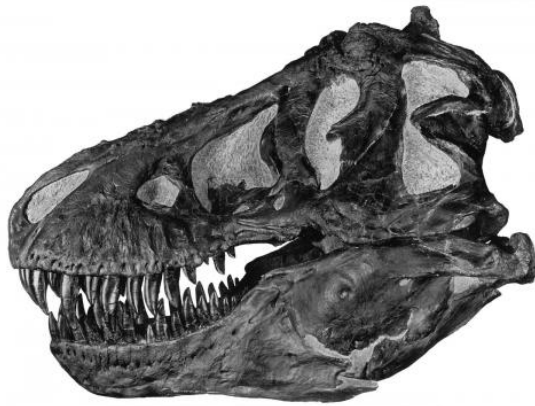




The jaw of an adult *T. rex* was huge - paleontologists believe some were as large as five feet - and it contained between 50 to 60 bone-crunching teeth. Some of those teeth were thick, conical and very long (between nine and twelve inches).

Paleontologists have always believed those *T. rex* jaws were powerful, but recent studies suggest the bite of an adult *T. rex* was even more deadly than scientists first believed. Karl Bates (from the University of Liverpool) and Peter Falkingham (from the Royal Veterinary College, London, and Brown University) made their assessment based on computer modeling.

We learn more about their results from the *Smithsonian Magazine*:

When Bates and Falkingham used computer models to simulate T. rex's bite, the result was "quite surprising," Bates told us: a maximum bite force of almost 12,800 pounds, about the equivalent of an adult T. rex's body weight (or 13 Steinway Model D concert grand pianos) slamming down on its prey.

That would make T. rex the hardest-biting terrestrial animal ever known. (C. megalodon, an extinct giant shark, bit at an estimated 41,000 pounds; Deinosuchus, an ancient crocodilian, at about 23,000 pounds.)

Bates and Falkingham's figure was two to three times greater than previous estimates, six to seven times greater than the biting force they calculated for the dinosaur Allosaurus and about three and a half times greater than the hardest bite measured in an extant species, an Australian saltwater crocodile.

This image depicts the jaw of a *T. rex*.

Credits:

[Image online](#), courtesy American Museum of Natural History (AMNH). AMNH 5027 (complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* skull) from 1912.

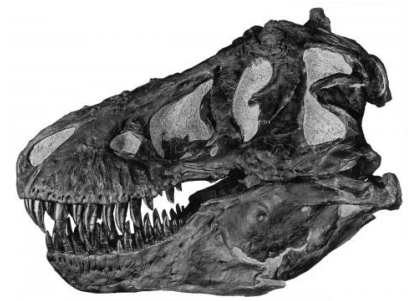
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See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

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T. Rex Jaws

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