

The olfactory system, or sense of smell, is the sensory system used for smelling. [Olfaction](#) is one of the special senses, that have directly associated specific organs. Most mammals and reptiles have a main olfactory system and an accessory olfactory system.

The peripheral olfactory system consists mainly of the nostrils, ethmoid bone, nasal cavity, and the olfactory epithelium (layers of thin tissue covered in mucus that line the nasal cavity). The primary components of the layers of epithelial tissue are the mucous membranes, olfactory glands, olfactory neurons, and nerve fibers of the [olfactory nerves](#).

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