

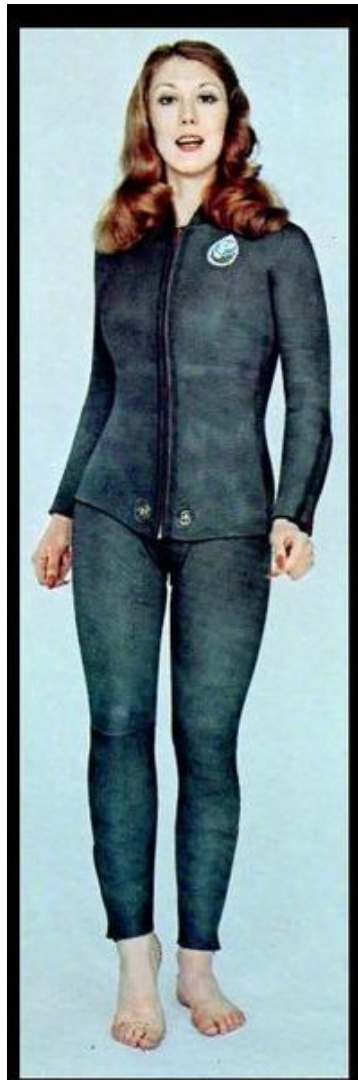
# Shark Skin & Swimsuits

by ReadWorks



Pixabay

*shark closeup*



*Photograph of a sharkskin wetsuit*

A shark's skin is covered in tiny scales called denticles. Denticles, or "little skin teeth," help the shark move quickly in the water. The denticles are shaped in a way that allows water to flow past the shark. They are

also rough, which makes it difficult for algae and barnacles to grow on them.

Scientists have been inspired by shark skin. They have been working to invent a swimsuit made out of artificial shark skin. Would you want a sharkskin swimsuit? It's likely that these suits will be too expensive to afford for a while. It is also expected that these suits will be banned from major swimming competitions. It is estimated that the suits would reduce swimming time by 3 to 5 percent. This would give an unfair advantage to anyone wearing one in a race.

Scientists also believe that an artificial shark skin material would be ideal for ships. This material would allow the ship to move through water more quickly and efficiently. It would also stop any algae and barnacles from growing on the ship. As a result, the shark skin ship material would cut down on oil costs and on clean-up costs.