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**Elephants have a sixth sense from their whiskers – 16th February 2026**

## Level 4

Scientists have found a previously unknown ability in elephants. It explains why the elephant trunk is so dexterous. The whiskers on the trunk are sensitive enough to feel small and delicate objects. The scientists say the incredible sensitivity of the whiskers makes up for the elephant's poor eyesight. The whiskers help the elephant navigate, find food, and communicate. The whiskers are "smart" and give elephants an added sense of intelligence.

The research could help advance robotics and neuroscience. A researcher said: "Each whisker...acts as a tactile sensory organ." Elephants can pick up a potato chip without breaking it. The research could help increase dexterity in robots. Another researcher said her research could advance neuroscience. She said we could understand more about "tactile perception". It could also help us to understand how the brain helps us to think, feel, and act.

## Level 5

Zoologists have uncovered a previously unknown sense ability in elephants. It explains why the elephant trunk is so dexterous. The scientists found that the whiskers at the end of the trunk are sensitive enough to feel very small and delicate objects. The scientists are from the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems. They say the incredible sensitivity of the whiskers makes up for the elephant's poor eyesight. The whiskers are essential for navigating, finding food, and communicating. The researchers say the whiskers are "smart" and give elephants an added sense of intelligence.

Scientists believe their research will help advance robotics and neuroscience. A study co-author said: "Each whisker on elephants' trunks acts as a tactile sensory organ." This means elephants can pick up a delicate potato chip without breaking it. The research could help increase dexterity in robots. Another researcher is excited about how her research could advance neuroscience. She said her findings could increase our understanding of "tactile perception". She says the study will help us to understand how the brain's neurons process information to think, feel, and act.

## Level 6

Zoologists in Germany have uncovered a previously unknown sensory faculty in elephants. It explains why the giant beasts' trunks are so dexterous. The scientists found that the whiskers at the tip of the trunk are sensitive enough to detect the smallest, most delicate objects. The scientists are from the Haptic Intelligence Department at the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems. They say the incredible sensitivity of the whiskers compensates for the elephant's poor eyesight. The whiskers are essential for navigating, locating food, and social communication. The researchers say the whiskers are "smart" and give the elephant an added sense of intelligence.

Scientists believe the insights from their research will assist in advancing robotics and neuroscience. Study co-author Dr Andrew Schulz said: "Each whisker on elephants' trunks acts as a tactile sensory organ." This allows an elephant to pick up something as delicate as a potato chip without breaking it. The research could help increase dexterity in robots. Dr Lena Kaufmann is excited about how the research could advance neuroscience. She said her findings "contribute to our understanding of the tactile perception of these fascinating animals". She says the study will increase our understanding of "neuronal computation" — how the brain's neurons process information to think, feel, and act.