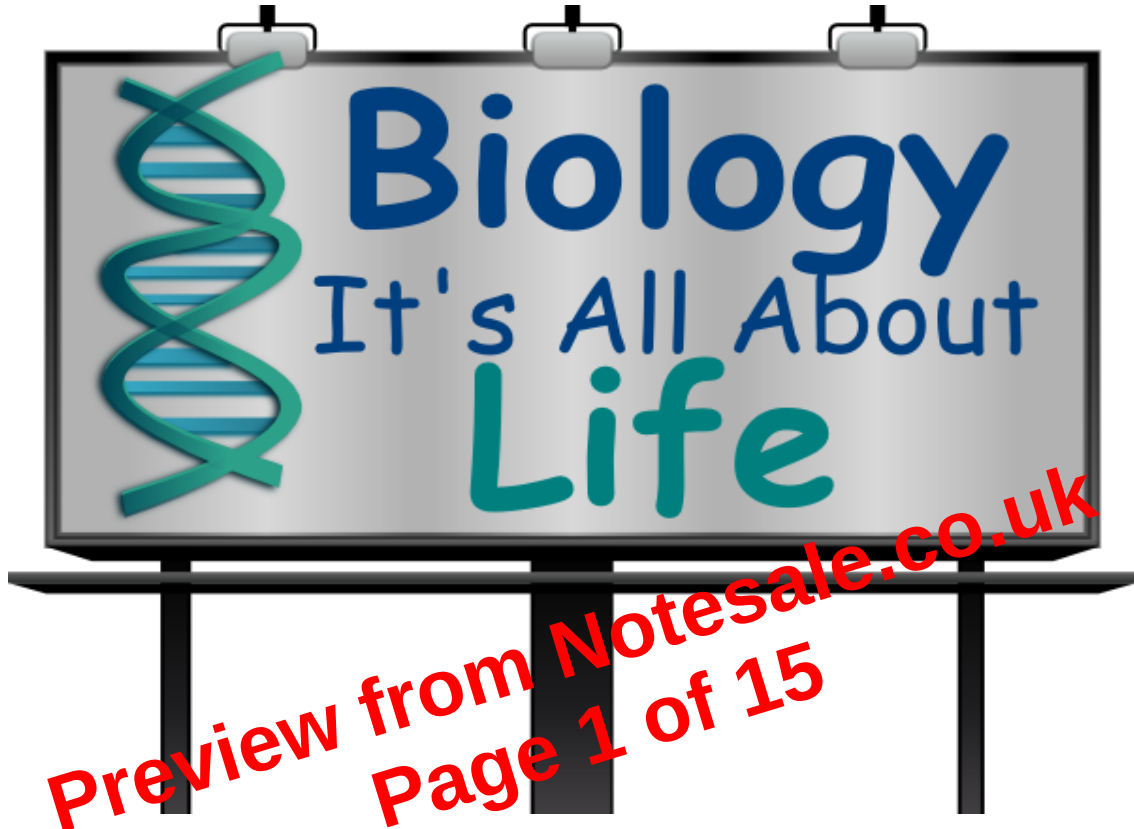


The Living body



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Chapter 1- Enzymes (Part 1)

1.1– What is an enzyme?

- Enzymes are biological catalysts – they speed up reactions.
- A catalyst is a substance which increases the speed of a reaction, without being changed or used up in the reaction. They convert a substance into a product.
- Enzymes are also proteins. All proteins are made up of chains of amino acids. These chains are folded into unique shapes, which enzymes need to carry out their functions.
- Enzymes can:
 - Build large molecules from many smaller ones, e.g. building starch from glucose molecules.
 - Change one molecule into another one, e.g. convert one type of sugar into another.
 - Break down large molecules into smaller ones, e.g. all the digestive enzymes do this.
- Enzymes speed up chemical reactions in cells such as:
 - DNA replication
 - Protein synthesis
 - Digestion.

