

Synovial joints have six distinguishing features;

1. Articular cartilage: hyaline cartilage which prevents the crushing between two bone ends.
2. Joint cavity – which is a small, fluid-filled potential space.
3. Articular (joint) capsule – two layers. An external fibrous layer and a dense irregular connective tissue. The inner synovial membrane is made up of loose connective tissue which makes the synovial fluid.
4. Synovial fluid – a viscous, slippery filtrate of plasma and hyaluronic acid which lubricates and nourishes articular cartilage and contains phagocytic cells to remove microbes and debris.
5. Different types of reinforcing ligaments – the capsular is a thickened part of fibrous layer. The extracapsular is outside the capsule and intercapsular is deep to capsule, covered by synovial membrane.
6. Nerves and blood vessels – nerve fibres detect pain, motor joint position and stretch, capillary beds supply filtrate for synovial fluid.

Other features of synovial joints include fatty pads which form cushioning between fibrous layer and synovial membrane or bone. Articular discs (menisci) which are Fibrocartilage separates articular surfaces to improve "fit" of bone ends, stabilize joint, and reduce wear and tear.

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Page 2 of 2