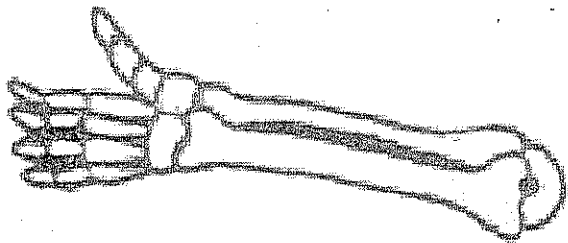
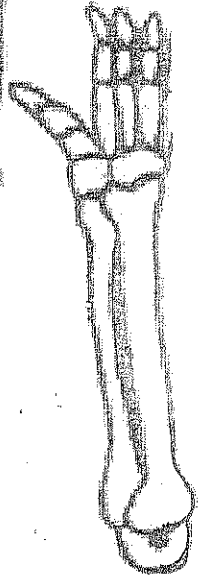
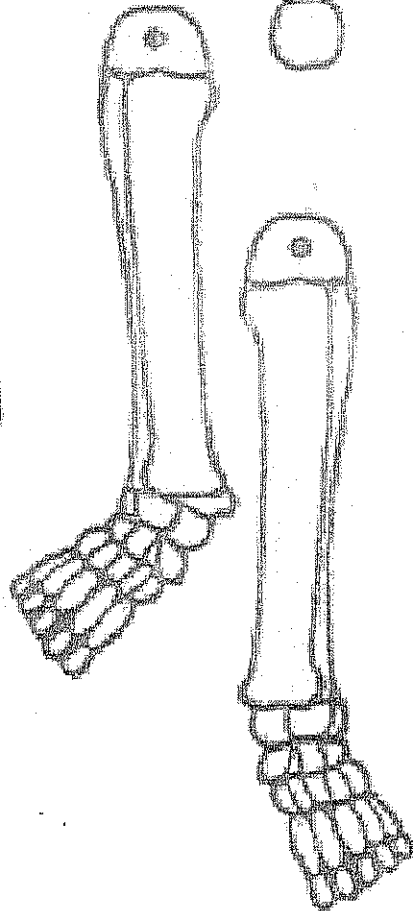


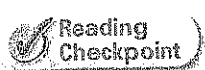
Upper Arm Bone

Knee Caps



Upper Arm Bone

Shape and Support Your skeleton determines the shape of your body, much as a steel frame determines the shape of a building. The backbone, or vertebral column, is the center of the skeleton. Locate the backbone in Figure 6. Notice that the bones in the skeleton are in some way connected to this column. If you move your fingers down the center of your back, you can feel the 26 small bones, or **vertebrae** (VUR tuh bray) (singular: *vertebra*), that make up your backbone. Bend forward at the waist and feel the bones adjust as you move. You can think of each individual vertebra as a bead on a string. Just as a beaded necklace is flexible and able to bend, so too is your vertebral column. If your backbone were just one bone, you would not be able to bend or twist.



Why is the vertebral column considered the center of the skeleton?

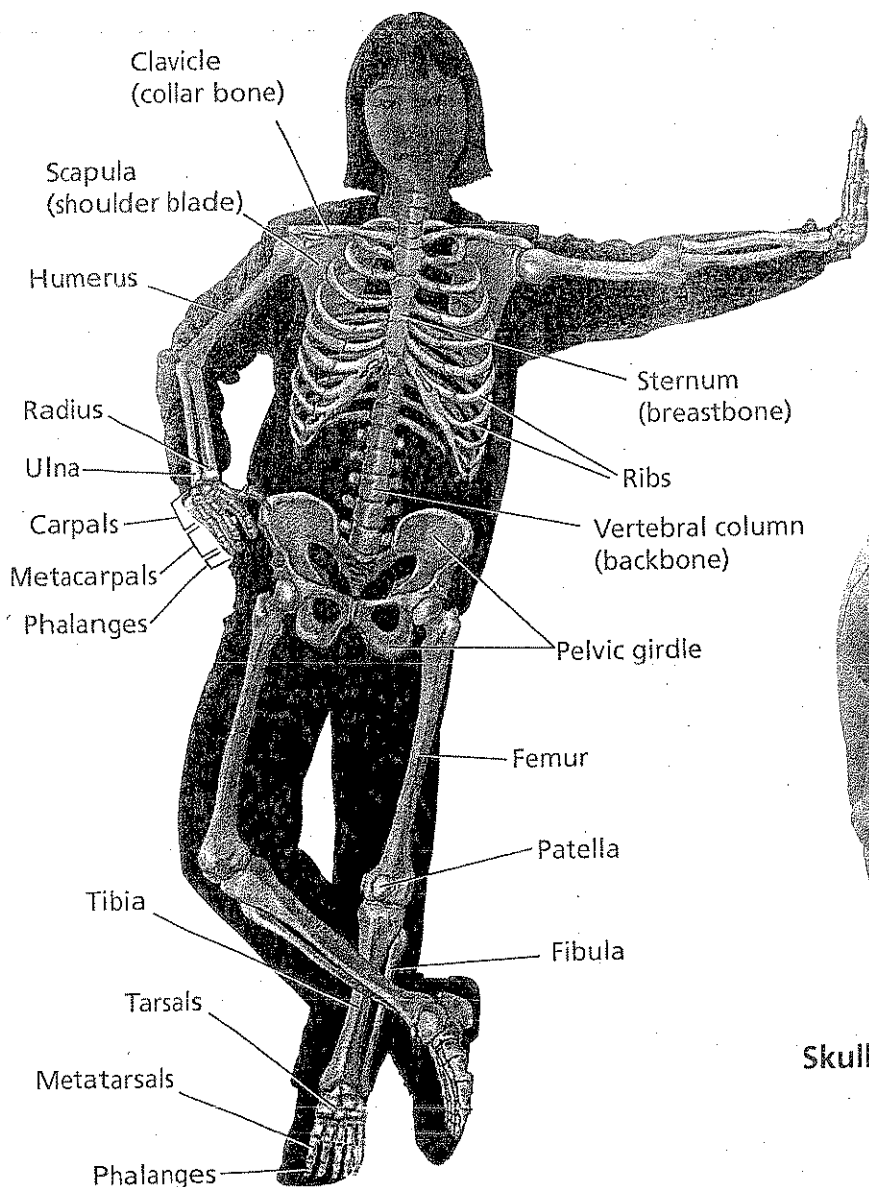


FIGURE 6

The Skeleton

The skeleton provides a framework that supports and protects many other body parts. **Comparing and Contrasting** *In what ways is the skeleton like the steel framework of a building? In what ways is it different?*

