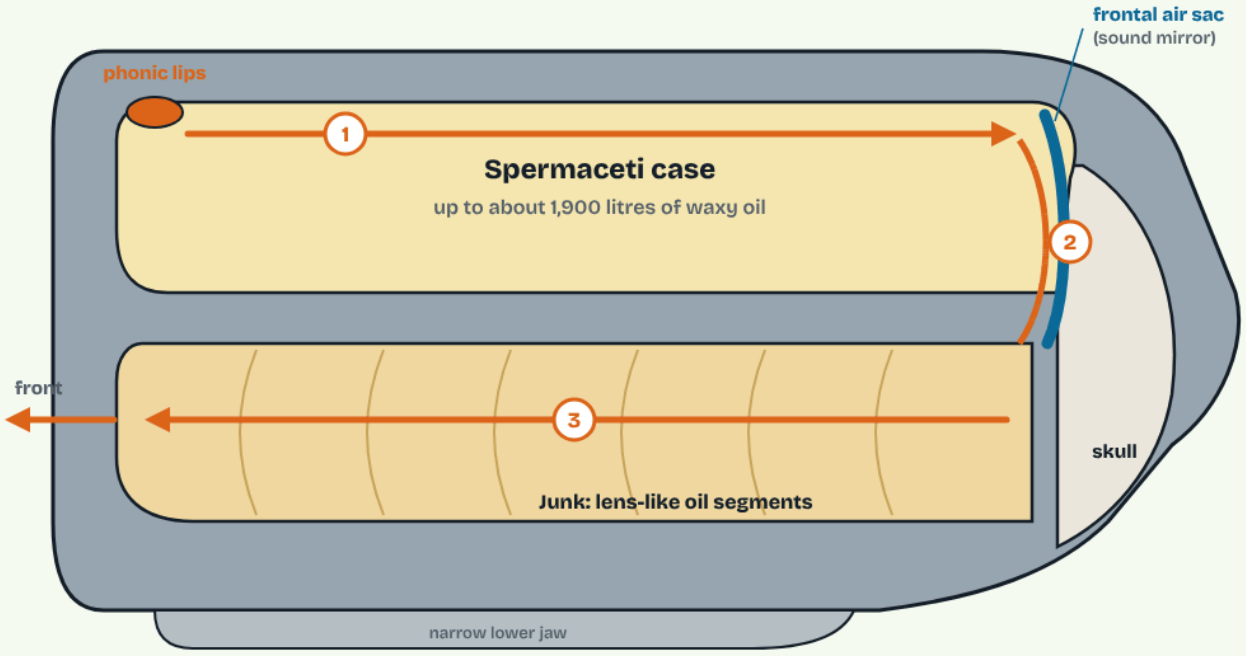
That is why

Why is a sperm whale's head so big?

Most of it is a sound machine: an oil-filled organ that builds and focuses the loudest clicks in the animal world.

A Inside the head: the path of a click



1 **A click is made at the phonic lips** and travels back through the oil case.

2 **It bounces off the air sac at the skull** which works like a mirror.

3 **The junk focuses it into a beam** that leaves the front of the head.

B Key facts

1 **Loudest animal click**

Clicks reach about 230 dB, among the loudest animal sounds.

2 **A third of the body**

The head can be up to a third of the whale's total length.

3 **Hunting in the dark**

Dives usually reach 300 to 800 m, and up to about 2,250 m, where echolocation finds squid.

Still debated: buoyancy

Some think cooling the oil helps them sink. Sound production has stronger support.

The giant head is a sonar, not a brain.

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