

The Nervous System

Body & health

Central and peripheral, voluntary and automatic — how the divisions fit together.

Everything below the first row sits inside the peripheral nervous system.

Division	Contains	Controls
Central	Brain, spinal cord	Processing and integration
Peripheral	All other nerves	Carrying signals both ways
Somatic	Motor and sensory nerves	Voluntary movement, sensation
Autonomic	Internal nerves	Automatic functions
Sympathetic	Part of autonomic	Fight or flight
Parasympathetic	Part of autonomic	Rest and digest

A reflex does not reach the brain. The spinal cord answers directly, which is why it is faster than thought.