

Glossary of Geographical Vocabulary

Keyword	Definition
Aerial photograph	A photograph taken from an aircraft or satellite in flight.
Arctic Circle	The imaginary circle around the earth, parallel to the equator, at latitude 66° 33' north.
Atlas	A collection of maps, usually in book form .
Biome	A biome is a large area on the Earth's surface that is defined by the types of animals and plants living there
Characteristics	A distinguishing quality, attribution or trait.
City	Any populous place. In Britain a city is recognised as a town that has received the title from the crown.
Climate	The long term prevalent weather conditions of an area, determined by latitude, altitude etc.
Coast	The line or zone where the land meets the sea.
Compass	Magnetic instrument used for finding direction, having a magnetic needle which points to the magnetic north.
Continent	One of the earths large land masses.
Country	Any political unit or state on a national scale, regardless of whether it is dependent or independent.
Desert	A region that is devoid or almost devoid of vegetation because of low rainfall.
Distribution	Arrangement or location of something.
Earthquake	A series of vibrations at the earth's surface caused by movement along a fault place, volcanic activity, etc.
Environment	External conditions or surroundings.
Equator	The great circle of the earth, equidistant from the poles, dividing the Northern and Southern hemispheres.
Fieldwork	An investigation or search for material or data, made in the field opposed to the classroom.
Forest	A large wooded area having a thick growth of trees and plants.
Global	Covering or relating to the whole world.
Hemisphere	Half of the terrestrial globe, dividing into northern and southern hemispheres by the equator and eastern and western hemispheres by some meridians, usually 0° and 180°
Human processes	A process in which human beings are involved
Interdependent	When two or more things are dependent on each other.

Landmark	A prominent or well-known object in or feature of a particular landscape.
Land use	Function of the land – what it is used for.
Latitude	An angular distance measured in degrees north and south of the equator.
Locality	A neighbourhood or area. The site or scene of an event.
Location	A site or position.
Longitude	Distance in degrees east or west of the Prime Meridian at 0° measured by the angle between the plane of the prime meridian and that of the meridian through the point in question, or by time difference.
Map	A diagrammatic representation of the earth's surface or part of it, showing the geographical distribution of features.
Minerals	Any of a class of naturally occurring solid inorganic substances with a characteristic crystalline form and a homogenous chemical composition.
Mountains	A natural upward projection of the earth's surface, higher and steeper than a hill.
Ocean	A very large stretch of sea, one of five oceans of the world – Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Arctic and Southern.
Office	A room or rooms in which business, professional duties, clerical work, etc. are carried out.
Pattern	An arrangement of repeated or corresponding parts.
Plan perspective	An outline or sketch
Region	An area considered as a unit for geographical reasons.
Resource	A source of economic wealth, especially of a country or business enterprise. A supply or source of aid or support; something resorted to in time of need.
River	A large natural stream of fresh water flowing a long a definite course, usually into the sea.
Scale	The ratio between the size of something real and that of a representation of it.
Seasonal	Of, relating to, or occurring at a certain season or seasons of the year.
Significance	The consequence or importance of something
Spatial variation	A difference of or relating to a space
Soil	The top layer of the land surface of the earth that is composed of disintegrated rock particles, humus, water and air.
Symbol	Something that represents or stands for something else.
Time zone	A region throughout which the same standard time is used. There are 24 time zones in the world, demarcated approximately by meridians at 15° intervals, an hour apart.
Topographical	Detailed description of the surface features of a region.
Trade	The act or instance of buying and selling goods and services.
Tropic of Capricorn	Line of latitude at 23.5°S of the equator.
Tropic of Cancer	Line of latitude 23.5°N of the equator.

Variation	The act, process, condition, or result of changing or varying. Something that differs from a standard or convention.
Vegetation belt	Plant life as a whole within a certain area.
Valley	A long depression in the land surface , usually containing a river, formed by erosion or movements in the earth's crust.
Village	A small group of houses in a country area, larger than a hamlet.
Volcano	An opening in the earth's crust from which molten lava, rock fragments, ashes, dust and gases are ejected from below the earth's surface.
Water cycle	The circulation of the earth's water, in which water evaporates from the sea into the atmosphere where it condenses and falls as rain or snow.
Weather	The day to day meteorological conditions, especially temperature, cloudiness and rainfall, affecting a specific place.