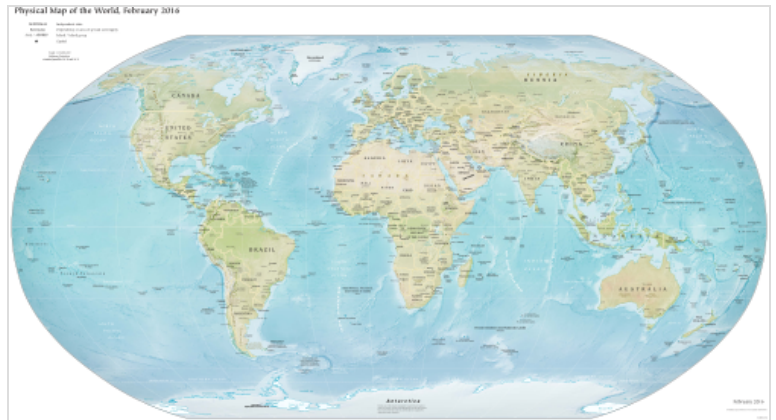




Geography

Geography (from Greek: γεωγραφία, *geographia*, literally "earth description")^[1] is the study of earth and its people. It is one of the social sciences.^[2] Its features are things like continents, seas, rivers and mountains. The 'inhabitants' of Earth are all the people and animals that live on it. Its phenomena are the things that happen like tides, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and more.

A person who is an expert in geography is called a geographer. A geographer tries to understand the world and the things that are in it, how they started and how they have changed.^[3]



Map of Earth with country borders and big cities shown

There are two main parts of geography. These types are Physical geography and human geography. Physical geography studies the natural environment and human geography studies the human environment. The human environmental studies includes things such as the population in a country, how a country's economy is doing, and more. There is also environmental geography.

Maps are used in geography to see what land looks like. Geographers spend much time making maps and studying them. Making maps is called cartography, and people who specialize in making maps are called cartographers.

Branches

Physical geography

Physical geography (or physiography) focuses on geography as an Earth science. It tries to understand the physical problems and the issues of lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, pedosphere, and global flora and fauna (types of plants) patterns (biosphere).

Physical geography can be divided into many broad categories, including:



A photograph of a natural rock arch in a desert landscape. The arch is made of reddish-brown sandstone and stands on a sandy dune. In the background, there are more desert hills and mountains under a clear sky.

The diagram illustrates the flow of water in a landscape. It shows a snowfield at the top left, which feeds into a stream. The stream flows into a river, which then empties into the ocean. Below the surface, groundwater is shown flowing from the snowfield area towards the river and ocean. Labels indicate 'snowfield', 'stream', 'river', 'ocean', 'groundwater', and 'surface water'.

A 3D block diagram of a surface wave. A blue wavy line on a green surface represents the wave's path. Arrows labeled 'Up' and 'Down' indicate transverse motion perpendicular to the wave's direction. Arrows labeled 'Back' and 'Forth' indicate longitudinal motion parallel to the wave's direction. The wave is shown moving across the surface of a brown block.

A world map showing the distribution of the 100 most common languages. The map uses color-coding to represent different language families and their geographical spread. Major language families like Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, and Afroasiatic are clearly visible across the continents.

A cross-sectional diagram of soil horizons. The top layer is labeled 'O' and contains grass. Below it is 'A', then 'B', and finally 'C' at the bottom. The diagram shows roots extending from the surface into the A and B horizons. The C horizon is the deepest and contains small, rounded stones or pebbles. The layers are color-coded: O is dark brown, A is light brown, B is medium brown, and C is light tan.

geography

Human geography is the social science that covers the study of people and their communities, cultures, economies, and their interaction with the environment. Geographers studying the human environment may look at:

-
- A high-angle, wide shot of a massive crowd of people filling a city square. The individuals are densely packed, with many wearing red clothing, suggesting a coordinated event or protest. In the upper left, a green structure and a white van are visible. The overall scene conveys a sense of large-scale public gathering.

History

The oldest known world map dates back to ancient Babylon from the 9th century BC.^[4] The best known Babylonian world map is the *Imago Mundi* of 600 BC.^[5] Star charts (maps of the sky) are of a similar age.

During the Middle Ages, people in Europe made less maps. People in the eastern countries made more maps.^[6] Abū Zayd al-Balkhī created the "Balkhī school" of mapping in Baghdad.^[7]

Western Europe became known as the leader of geographic thought during the European Renaissance and The Age of Exploration (1400–1600). The printing press made maps and information about the world available to everyone. In 1650, the first edition of *Geographia Generalis* was published.

In the 1700s and 1800s, scientists started to study the relationship between the environment and its people.

Related pages

- Geodesy
- Geographer
- Geographical renaming
- Geopolitics
- International Geographical Union
- Landform
- Map
- Navigator
- Political geography

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