

Reader's Guide

Junior Worldmark Encyclopedia of Physical Geography presents a comprehensive survey of the physical geography of 192 countries of the world plus Taiwan, Antarctica, and Puerto Rico.

The entries are arranged alphabetically by country in five volumes. Following the format of other popular titles in the *Junior Worldmark* series, information in each entry is presented in a consistent format, allowing student researchers to find information and compare countries quickly and easily.

A topographic map—with notable mountain ranges and peaks, lakes, rivers, deserts, and coastal areas labeled—accompanies each entry. In addition, more than 200 photographs illustrate the varied landscapes found in the countries of the world. Adding further interest are the “Did You Know?” boxes appearing in the entries, noting interesting or unusual geographic features or facts or explaining regional geographic references.

Organization

Each volume begins with the contents listed for that volume, followed by a cumulative table of contents for all five volumes in the set. To help researchers who wish to identify a country within one of the world's continents, a finder table—Countries of the World by Continent—appears at the front of each volume. Words to Know, a glossary of terms related to geography, completes the front matter. Entries for individual countries follow. Although all numbered rubrics are included in every entry, entries vary in length depending primarily on the geographic complexity of the country's land area.

Each entry begins with a list of key facts about the physical characteristics of the country; measurements are provided in both metric and English units. Student researchers should be reminded that geography is an imprecise science, and measurements of geographical features may vary from source to source.

Key Facts

■ Official name

The countries of the world are referred to by a common name; the more formal official name is listed here.

■ Area

The country's area, usually including islands, is provided in square kilometers and square miles.

■ Highest point on mainland

The height, in meters and feet, is given for the highest point on the mainland portion of the country. For most countries, this is also the highest point anywhere in the country.

■ Highest point in territory

For some countries with islands and territories, the highest point not on the mainland is provided in meters and feet.

■ Lowest point on land

The elevation, in meters and feet, for the lowest point on the mainland portion of the country is provided.

■ Hemispheres

The country's hemispheres (Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western) help the researcher locate the country on the globe.

■ Time zone

The time zone of the country's capital is provided, with the time related to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). For some large countries, more than one time zone may be listed.

■ Longest distances

Measurements in kilometers and miles of the country's widest points from north to south and east to west are given. For some countries, longest distances may be measured on a slight diagonal (northwest to southeast, for example).

■ Land boundaries

The total distance making up the country's borders with other nations is provided in kilometers and miles, followed by the border distances with the individual neighboring countries.

■ Coastline

Coastline measurements, in kilometers and miles, are approximate. Coastline measurements are likely to vary from source to source.

■ Territorial sea limits

The territory extending into the ocean over which the country claims control or jurisdiction. Territorial sea limits are given in kilometers and nautical miles, and generally govern activities such as fishing and mineral rights.

The first four numbered rubrics offer a general overview of the country.

1 🌐 LOCATION AND SIZE

This section gives the reader an overview of where the country lies and provides its relation to the bodies of water around it. Also included is information about whether the country is divided into states, provinces, or other internal administrative units.

2 🌐 TERRITORIES AND DEPENDENCIES

Many countries exercise jurisdiction over territories—often islands—that are not part of the mainland. This section lists any such territories and dependencies.

3 🌐 CLIMATE

The general climate of the country is described, with a table providing seasonal temperature ranges included for many countries. General information about rainfall and snow patterns is also included here.

4 🌐 TOPOGRAPHIC REGIONS

An overview of the general topography (shape of the country's land surface) is provided, with key features (mountain ranges, plateaus, deserts, valleys, lakes, rivers) noted.

The next eight numbered rubrics—5 through 12—describe specific geographic features. All entries include all eight headings. Since all countries do not include every geographic feature, individual entries note the absence of specific features.

5 🌐 OCEANS AND SEAS

The oceans and seas bounding the country are listed. Subheadings describe specific features of the country and its coastal areas. Subheads are used in entries as appropriate and may include:

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Seacoast and Undersea Features

Includes discussion of nearby undersea features of note, such as deep ocean trenches or coral reefs.

Sea Inlets and Straits

Includes major bays, gulfs, sounds, channels, straits, and other sea inlets that characterize the coastal areas.

Islands and Archipelagos

Major islands and island chains are described here.

Other Coastal Features

Includes notable peninsulas, isthmuses, and describes the type and quality of the coastal areas.

6 INLAND LAKES

Major and significant lakes are included. When a lake straddles a border between two countries, it is covered in both entries. Major man-made reservoirs are also included in this section in some entries.

7 RIVERS AND WATERFALLS

Describes important rivers, giving length and general characteristics. Also includes major waterfalls.

8 DESERTS

Arid and semi-arid flatland regions are described.

9 FLAT AND ROLLING TERRAIN

Areas that range from flat and treeless to rounded terrain are described.

10 MOUNTAINS AND VOLCANOES

Mountain peaks, including volcanoes, are described here, typically in the context of a mountain range.

11 CANYONS AND CAVES

Notable canyons and cave systems are described.

12 PLATEAUS AND MONOLITHS

Regions of high elevation but with relatively flat terrain and monoliths (huge stone outcroppings) are described here.

The final two numbered rubrics describe notable man-made features, and provide resources for further study. Supplementing the Further Reading suggestions provided in each entry is the Selected Sources for Further Study that appears in the back of each volume.

13 MAN-MADE FEATURES

Notable man-made features—such as dams, canals, major bridges, tunnels, and other structures—that affect a country's geography are described.

14 FURTHER READING

This section lists selected books and Web sites that provide more information on the country's geography.

Additional Features

Additional reference materials appear at the back of each volume. Researchers looking for comparative information on some of the world's key geographic features can refer to a series of Appendixes. These provide the following rankings: continents by area;

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countries by area; countries by population; oceans and seas by area; oceans by depth; islands by area; deserts by area; mountain peaks by height; volcanoes by height; rivers by length; waterfalls by height; lakes by area; and lakes by depth. The seven wonders of the ancient world and seven wonders of the natural world are described in the final two appendixes. Lastly, a listing of selected references for the further study of physical geography completes the backmatter. Volume 5 contains a cumulative general index to all five volumes. Topographic world maps appear on each volume's endsheets.

Photographs

The photographs in *Junior Worldmark Encyclopedia of Physical Geography* were assembled

with assistance from ARAMCO; Raoul Russo, UNESCO imaging; Marcia L. Schiff, AP/Wide World Photos; Maura Malone, EPD Photos; and Mimi Dornack, National Geographic Imaging.

Comments and Suggestions

We welcome your comments and suggestions for features to be included in future editions. Please write: Editors, *Junior Worldmark Encyclopedia of Physical Geography*, U•X•L, 27500 Drake Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan 48331-3535; call toll-free: 1-800-877-4253; fax to (248) 699-8097; or send e-mail via <http://www.gale.com>.

Words to Know

A

- aboriginal** ④ Something that is the first or earliest known of its type in a country or region, such as an aboriginal forest.
- aborigines** ④ The first known inhabitants of a country and their descendants.
- acid rain** ④ Rain (or snow) that has become slightly acidic by mixing with industrial air pollution.
- alluvial plain** ④ Flatlands containing deposits of alluvium.
- alluvium** ④ Clay, silt, sand, or gravel deposited by running water, such as a stream or river.
- Antarctic Circle** ④ (also called South **Frigid Zone**) The parallel of latitude approximately 66°33' south and the region that lies between this latitude and the south pole; the region surrounding Antarctica.
- aquatic** ④ Of or relating to the water, particularly the animals and plants that live there.
- aqueduct** ④ A pipe or channel, usually man-made, that carries water from a remote source. Also, a bridge-like structure that carries water over obstacles.
- aquifer** ④ An underground layer of porous rock, sand, or gravel that holds water.
- arable land** ④ Land that is naturally suitable for cultivation by plowing and is used for growing crops.
- archipelago** ④ A group of islands or a body of water containing many islands.
- Arctic** ④ Relating to the northernmost part of the Earth that lies within and around the Arctic Circle. Also, **arctic**: anything that is frigidly and invariably cold.
- Arctic Circle** ④ (also called the North **Frigid Zone**) The parallel of latitude approximately 66°33' north and the region that lies between this latitude and the north pole.
- arid** ④ Extremely dry, particularly applied to regions of low rainfall where there is little natural vegetation and agriculture is difficult.

- artesian well** ④ A type of well where underground pressure forces water to overflow up to the surface.
- atmosphere** ④ The air surrounding the Earth's surface.
- atoll** ④ An island consisting of a strip or ring of coral surrounding a central lagoon.
- avalanche** ④ A swift sliding of snow or ice down a mountain.

B

- badlands** ④ Eroded and barren land.
- Balkan Peninsula** ④ The southernmost peninsula of Europe, which is surrounded by the Adriatic, Ionian, Aegean, and Black seas
- Balkan States** ④ (also called The Balkans) Those countries that lie on or near the Balkan Peninsula; includes Albania, Bulgaria, continental Greece, southeast Romania, European Turkey, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia.
- Baltic States** ④ The countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. These independent countries were once provinces of Russia and all border on the Baltic Sea.
- barren land** ④ Unproductive land that is partly or entirely treeless.
- barrier island** ④ An island parallel to the shore that was formed by wave and tidal action and protects the shore from rough ocean waves.
- barrier reef** ④ A coral reef that lies parallel to the coast, often forming a lagoon along the shore.
- basalt** ④ Black or nearly black dense rock, usually formed by the solidification of magma or from some other high-temperature geological event.
- basin** ④ A depression on land or on the ocean floor. Usually relatively broad and gently sloped, as compared to a trench, canyon, or crater.
- bay** ④ A wide inlet of a sea or a lake.
- bayou** ④ A stagnant or slow-moving body of water.
- beach** ④ An area of sediment deposited along the shoreline of a large body of water through the action of waves and the process of erosion.
- bedrock** ④ Solid rock lying under loose earth.