

**Earth**

Third planet from the Sun. Approximately 70% of its surface is covered by water.

**autumn**

The season of the year that occurs after summer and before winter. In the Northern Hemisphere it officially begins in late September.

**autumnal equinox**

The time when autumn officially begins.

**desert**

An arid region which experiences very little rainfall, and which may have little or no vegetation.

**asthenosphere**

This Earth layer is between 100 and 200 km below the surface, but may extend as deep as 400 km, the weak or soft zone in the upper mantle.

**crater**

A hole or depression on the surface of a planet, moon, asteroid, or other solid space object, caused by the impact of a meteorite.

**latitude**

**earthquake**

**environment**

<p>The position of an object on the Earth's surface measured north or south of the equator.</p>	<p>The shaking or movement of a portion of the Earth's surface.</p>	<p>The external conditions and surroundings, especially those that affect the quality of life of plants, animals and human beings.</p>
<p><u>equator</u></p>	<p><u>erosion</u></p>	<p><u>geography</u></p>
<p>The imaginary great circle of 0 degrees latitude on the Earth's surface, separating the Northern Hemisphere from the Southern Hemisphere.</p>	<p>The wearing away of the Earth's surface by the action of the sea, running water, moving ice, precipitation or wind.</p>	<p>The science dealing with Earth's surface, including climate, elevation, soil, vegetation, population, land use, industries, or states.</p>
<p><u>geology</u></p>	<p><u>glacier</u></p>	<p><u>Sun</u></p>
<p>The science that deals with Earth's dynamics and physical history, the rocks of which it is composed, and the physical, chemical, and biological changes on Earth.</p>	<p>A large piece of ice that survives for many years, slowly carving out the face of earth.</p>	<p>The star around which the Earth revolves. It comprises nearly the entire mass of our solar system.</p>

albedo

The ratio of the light reflected by a planet or moon compared to what it receives from space.

longitude

The position of an object on Earth's surface measured east or west of the Greenwich meridian.

biosphere

This sphere is the broadest level of ecological study, the sum of all ecosystems integrating all living beings and their relationships, interaction with the elements of the lithosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere.

volcano

Where lava, ash or gases escape to the surface. Come in several shapes and sizes but the most common are strato and shield.

plate tectonics

A theory that proposes that Earth's surface is made of pieces that move, collide, and slide past each other, resulting in earthquakes and volcanoes.

seasons

Spring, summer, autumn, and winter are the four of these.

spring

summer

summer solstice

<p>The season between winter and summer. In the Northern Hemisphere it officially begins in late March and lasts until late June.</p>	<p>The warmest season of the year. In the Northern Hemisphere it officially begins in late June and lasts until late September.</p>	<p>The time when summer officially begins.</p>
<p><u>vernal equinox</u></p>	<p><u>weather</u></p>	<p><u>winter</u></p>
<p>The time when spring officially begins.</p>	<p>Describes the condition of the atmosphere at a particular time and place, including wind, rain, snow, clouds, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and haze.</p>	<p>The coldest season of the year. In the Northern Hemisphere it officially begins in late December and lasts until late March.</p>
<p><u>winter solstice</u></p>	<p><u>tropics</u></p>	<p><u>climate</u></p>
<p>The time when winter officially begins.</p>	<p>The area of Earth between 23.5 degrees north latitude and 23.5 degrees south latitude.</p>	<p>Long-term weather conditions of a region, including temperature, air pressure, humidity, precipitation, sunshine, cloudiness, and winds, throughout the year, and averaged over several years.</p>

cryosphere

This sphere consists of portions of Earth's surface covered by sea ice, lake ice, river ice, snow cover, glaciers, ice caps and ice sheets, and frozen ground.

pedosphere

Outermost layer of the Earth that is composed of soil and subject to soil formation processes. Exists at the interface of the lithosphere, atmosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere.

axis

Earth rotates around this every 24 hours.

sunrise

The time at which the Sun appears above the eastern horizon in the morning.

sunset

The time at which the Sun disappears below the western horizon in the evening.

lithosphere

This is Earth's solid, outermost layer and includes the crust and the uppermost mantle. Lies above the asthenosphere.

hydrosphere

atmosphere

perihelion

This sphere is the combined mass of water found on, under, and over the surface of a planet.

The gases that surround a star, planet, or moon.

The point in Earth's orbit when it is closest to the Sun. Occurs around January 4.

aphelion

ocean

continent

The point in Earth's orbit when it is farthest from the Sun. Occurs around July 4.

A body of salt water that covers a large part of Earth's surface.

The world's main continuous expanses of land, including Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America.

North Pole

South Pole

hemisphere

Point in the Northern Hemisphere where the Earth's axis of rotation meets its surface. It is the northernmost point on Earth's surface.

Point in the Southern Hemisphere where the Earth's axis of rotation meets its surface. It is the southernmost point on Earth's surface.

A half of the Earth, usually divided into northern and southern halves by the equator.