

# THE AMERICAS - Geography

## Using the Atlas

### Longitude

Longitude lines run vertically from the North Pole to the South Pole. They are measured in degrees east and west of the Prime Meridian, which is the line that divides the Earth into Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

### Prime Meridian

The line that divides the Earth into Eastern and Western Hemispheres. The starting point for time zones is the Prime Meridian, which is located in Greenwich, London. This line is at 0 degrees longitude. As you move east or west from this line, you enter different time zones. Each time zone is usually one hour ahead or behind the one next to it.

### Koppen System

The Koppen System is a way of categorising different climates around the world based on temperature and rainfall patterns. This system helps us understand why some places are hot and dry, while others are cold and wet. See back for further detail.

### Latitude

Latitude lines run horizontally around the Earth, like rungs on a ladder. They are measured in degrees north and south of the Equator.

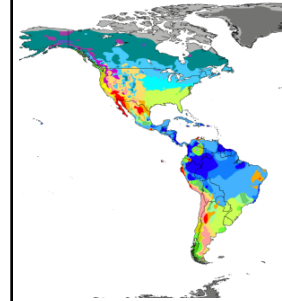
### Equator

The line that divides the Earth into Northern and Southern Hemispheres. The Equator is at 0 degrees latitude and is like Earth's middle belt. As you move north of the Equator, the latitude lines increase in degrees up to 90 degrees North at the North Pole. Conversely, as you move south of the Equator, the latitude lines increase in degrees up to 90 degrees South at the South Pole.

### Time Zone

Time zones are imaginary lines that divide the world into different sections based on the time of day. The Earth is divided into 24 time zones, one for each hour of the day. We measure our time zone using Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

## Overview



The Americas is made up of two separate continents, North and South America. The United States of America is in North America and is comprised of 50 states.

Interestingly, although Alaska is part of the USA, it is located further north, sharing a border with Canada.

### North America



### South America



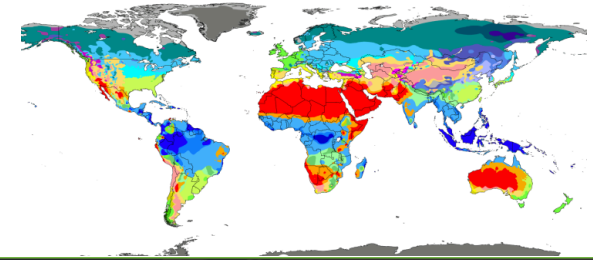
We will study a place called Death Valley, a valley in Eastern California. It is so named due to its subtropical, hot desert climate (Köppen: BWh), with long, extremely hot summers; short, warm winters; and little rainfall, making it a difficult place to live. Death Valley has many famous and unusual geographical features. Some of these features include sand dunes, salt flats, colourful rocks, and tall mountains. We will make comparisons between Death Valley and Shepshed.

## Additional vocabulary



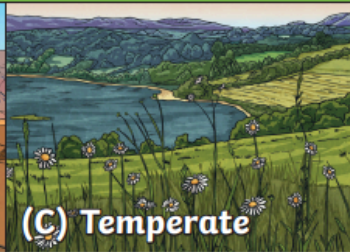


biome - city - climate; group, type & code - continent - four figure grid references - human features - physical features - state -

divisions of the Earth - Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, The Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the Arctic and Antarctic Circles.

Af	BWh	Csa	Cwa	Cfa	Dsa	Dwa	Dfa	ET
Am	BWk	Csb	Cwb	Cfb	Dsb	Dwb	Dfb	EF
Aw	BSh		Cwc	Cfc	Dsc	Dwc	Dfc	
	BSk				Dsd	Dwd	Dfd	



The Koppen System

Climate Group	 (A) Tropical		 (B) Dry		 (C) Temperate		 (D) Continental		 (E) Polar	
Climate Type	(f) wet (or rainforest)		(W) arid (or desert)	(h) hot	(s) dry summer	(a) hot summer	(s) dry summer	(a) hot summer	(T) tundra	
	(m) monsoon		(S) semiarid (or steppe)	(k) cold	(w) dry winter	(b) warm summer	(w) dry winter	(b) warm summer		
	(w) wet & dry (or savanna)			(n) mild	(f) without dry season	(c) cold summer	(f) without dry season	(c) cold summer (d) very cold winter	(F) ice cap (or eternal winter)	

Climate Codes	<p>Af – tropical rainforest climate</p> <p>Am – tropical monsoon climate</p> <p>Aw – Tropical savanna climate</p>	<p>BWh – hot desert climate</p> <p>BWk – cold desert climate</p> <p>BWn – mild desert climate</p> <p>BSh – hot semiarid climate</p> <p>BSk – cold semiarid climate</p> <p>BSn – mild semiarid climate</p>	<p>Csa – hot-summer (Mediterranean) climate</p> <p>Csb – warm-summer (Mediterranean) climate</p> <p>Csc – cool-summer (Mediterranean) climate</p> <p>Cwa – humid subtropical climate with dry winter</p> <p>Cwb – subtropical highland or temperate oceanic climate with dry winter</p> <p>Cwc – Cold subtropical climate or subpolar oceanic climate with dry winter</p> <p>Cfa – humid subtropical climate</p> <p>Cfb – temperate oceanic climate</p> <p>Cfc – Subpolar oceanic climate</p>	<p>Dfa – hot summer humid continental climate</p> <p>Dfb – warm summer humid continental climate</p> <p>Dfc – subarctic climate</p> <p>Dfd – very cold subarctic climate</p> <p>Dwa – hot summer humid continental climate</p> <p>Dwb – warm summer humid continental climate</p> <p>Dwc – subarctic climate</p> <p>Dwd – very cold subarctic climate</p> <p>Dsa – hot, dry summer continental climate</p> <p>Dsb – warm, dry summer continental climate</p> <p>Dsc – dry summer subarctic climate</p> <p>Dsd – very cold dry summer subarctic climate</p>	<p>ET – Mild tundra climate</p> <p>ETf – cold tundra climate</p> <p>EF – ice cap (eternal winter) climate</p>
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