

WORLD'S ISLANDS

- An island is a piece of land completely surrounded by water.
- There are islands in every ocean and sea. Very small islands can be called islets, or cays (say keys).
- There are islands in rivers and in lakes. An island in a river or an island in a lake may be called an eyot.
- Some islands have been made by people.
- Because islands are cut off from other landmasses, they are often the home of unique plants and animals.
 - Borneo for example, has hundreds of plants and animals that are found nowhere else on Earth (for example, proboscis monkeys).
 - On Madagascar, lemurs are a unique type of monkey. More than 100 species live in forests on the island.



Two Main Kinds of Islands

- **Continental islands** are bodies of high ground that rise above the sea level of the continental shelf of a continent. A continental shelf is the land that extends outwards from the continent and is covered by shallow seas.
 - Greenland and Tasmania are examples of continental islands.
 - The island of Borneo, a continental island, is shared by two nations: Malaysia and Indonesia.
- **Oceanic islands** are not on the continental shelf. They are active or extinct volcanoes that rise above sea level from the ocean floor. Iceland and Tonga are examples of oceanic islands.
 - The few oceanic islands that are not volcanic are tectonic. This happens where plate movements have lifted up the deep ocean floor to above the surface. Macquarie Island in the Pacific is an example of an island formed by movement of tectonic plates.

Other Kinds of Islands

- An **atoll** is a ring shaped island made out of coral that has a lagoon of water inside it.
 - An atoll needs coral reef building so they are found mainly in tropical waters.
 - Most are in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.
 - Atolls can be quite small or be large like Kwajalein in the Marshal Islands. It is 130 kilometers long and 32 kilometers wide.
- An **archipelago** is a group of islands in the same part of the sea.
 - Indonesia and the Philippines are archipelagos made up of thousands of islands.
- A **desert** island is one where no one lives. This does not mean that the island is a desert, but rather that it is deserted.
- Coral Sea Islands off the northeastern coast of Australia are an example of desert islands.
 - There are thousands of desert islands in the oceans.
- **Man-made** islands. One example of this is the Kansai Airport in Japan which sits on a manmade island.



Fun Facts about Islands

- Java is the world's most populated island with over 130 million people.
- The highest mountain on an island is Puncak Jaya on the island of New Guinea.
- The largest island in the Mediterranean Sea is Sicily.
- Around 1 in 6 people on the planet live on an island.
- Tierra del Fuego island is the southernmost inhabited place on Earth.
- In the 1960s, a volcanic island near Iceland emerged from the sea.
- Sandbars may connect tidal islands to the mainland at low tide.

10 Largest Islands by Area

Country	Area (Sq. Miles)
1. Greenland	• 822706
2. New Guinea	• 303381
3. Borneo	• 288869
4. Madagascar	• 226917
5. Baffin Island	• 195928
6. Sumatra	• 171069
7. Honshu	• 87182
8. Victoria Island	• 83897
9. Great Britain	• 80823
10. Ellesmere Island	• 75767

10 Largest Islands by Population

Island	Population (Date)
1. Java (Indonesia)	• 130,667,000 (2009)
2. Honshu (Japan)	• 103,000,000 (2005)
3. Great Britain (United Kingdom)	• 58,900,000 (2007)
4. Sumatra (Indonesia)	• 46,797,000 (2009)
5. Luzon (Philippines)	• 46,228,000 (2007)
6. Taiwan (Republic of China)	• 22,790,000 (2006)
7. Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka)	• 20,700,000 (2005)
8. Mindanao (Philippines)	• 19,793,000 (2007)
9. Madagascar (Madagascar)	• 18,600,000 (2005)
10. Hispaniola (Republic, Haiti)	• 17,400,000 (2005)