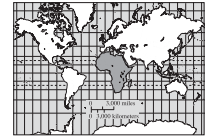


Physical Geography of Africa

Location: Africa is located in the eastern hemisphere. It is south of Europe and southwest of Asia. It is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Red Sea to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the east, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Approximately two-thirds of the continent is located in the northern hemisphere and a third in the southern hemisphere.



Size: Africa is approximately 11,700,000 square miles (30,300,000 km²) in area, which makes it a little more than three times the size of the United States. It is the second-largest continent after Asia. The greatest distance from south to north is about 5,000 miles (8,000 km) and from east to west 4,700 miles (7,600 km). The highest point of the continent is the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro 19,340 ft. (5,895 m). The lowest point is Lake Assal, which is 509 feet (155 m) below sea level.

Climate: The climate throughout Africa is generally warm to hot. In most parts of Africa the difference between day and night temperatures is greater than the difference between summer and winter temperatures.

Precipitation varies greatly on the continent. Most of the heaviest rainfall occurs in central Africa. Snow falls in the higher elevations. In the northern and southern regions, rainfall is limited.

Landforms: Africa is basically a gigantic plateau. The three dominant landforms on this plateau are deserts, grasslands, and tropical rain forests.

The largest and most famous desert in Africa is the Sahara. It extends across northern Africa about 3,500 miles (5,600 km), a distance greater than that between Los Angeles and New York. In the south, the principal deserts are the Namib and Kalahari. Together, deserts cover about two-fifths of Africa.

Grasslands, or savannahs, also cover about two-fifths of Africa. Most of these grasslands are located between desert areas and the tropical rain forests.

Tropical rain forests make up about one-fifth of the continent. The largest area of rain forest is located in central Africa, although some can also be found in the southeast and on the island of Madagascar.

There are two important river basins in Africa. One is along the Nile River in the northeastern corner of the continent. The Nile is the longest river in the world. The other basin is the huge Congo Basin in central Africa, which includes the Congo River and its tributaries.

The longest freshwater lake in the world, Lake Tanganyika, is located in eastern Africa, as is Lake Victoria, the world's third-largest lake.

The major mountain ranges of Africa are in the extreme northwest and in the east. In the northwest are the Atlas Mountains. In the east are many high mountains, including Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa.

Many islands are part of Africa, including one of the largest in the world, Madagascar.

One interesting feature of the continent is the Great Rift Valley. It runs north to south for hundreds of miles (km) in the eastern region of the continent. This feature is actually many steep-sided valleys formed by cracks in Earth's surface.

#7650 © Teacher Created Resources—May be reproduced for non-commercial, educational use only.



#7650 © Teacher Created Resources—May be reproduced for non-commercial, educational use only.

Cities of Africa

This map of Africa is labeled with letters that mark the locations of important cities. Match these letters with the correct names. Use the information provided below to help.

- _____ 1. Cape Town
- _____ 2. Johannesburg
- _____ 3. Alexandria
- _____ 4. Kinshasa
- _____ 5. Addis Ababa
- _____ 6. Casablanca
- _____ 7. Nairobi
- _____ 8. Cairo
- _____ 9. Lagos
- _____ 10. Algiers



1. This city is located in southernmost Africa near the Cape of Good Hope. It is considered the second-largest city of South Africa.
2. Beneath this city lie many gold mines, the metal that made this South Africa's most important city. It is considered the largest city in South Africa.
3. This is the second-largest city and most important port of Egypt. It is famous for its place in the ancient history of Egypt and the Roman Empire.
4. Located along the south bank of the Congo River, this is the largest city of the central African country of Zaire. It is also Zaire's capital.
5. This is the largest city and the capital of Ethiopia. It is famous for its great open-air market, the Mercato, and as an international convention center.
6. One of the major ports of North Africa, this city is the largest in Morocco. It is divided into sections, such as Old Medinah, New Medinah, and Mellah.
7. This is the capital and largest city of Kenya. Among other things, it is famous for a national park located within the city limits.
8. This is the largest city in Africa. It is the capital of Egypt and is located in the northeastern part of the country along the Nile River.
9. Located in western Africa, this is the capital and largest city of Nigeria. It lies on the coast and on four islands in the Gulf of Guinea.
10. This is the largest city and capital of Algeria. The oldest section of the city, the Casbah, is located on a hill.

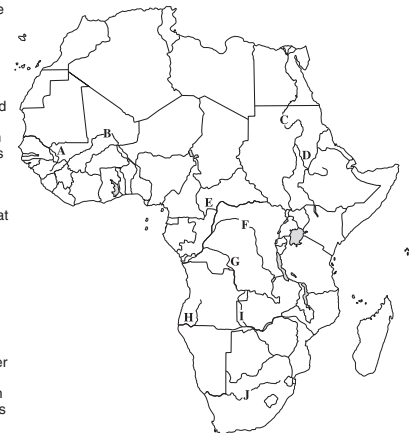
Answer Key: 1.F, 2.D, 3.G, 4.I, 5.C, 6.B, 7.H, 8.J, 9.E, 10.A

#7650 © Teacher Created Resources—May be reproduced for non-commercial, educational use only.

Rivers of Africa

Use the clues to help you match the letters on the map to the correct names.

- _____ 1. **Blue Nile**—The source of this river is in Ethiopia. It flows northwestward until it empties into the Nile River in Sudan.
- _____ 2. **Congo River**—Located in central Africa, this is the fifth-longest river in the world. Its source is in Zaire, and on its journey to the Atlantic Ocean it forms part of the border between that country and Congo.
- _____ 3. **Cunene River**—This river rises in Angola, flows south to that country's border with Namibia, and then turns west to flow into the Atlantic Ocean.
- _____ 4. **Kasai River**—This river begins in Angola. It does not empty into an ocean. Instead, it flows through Zaire until it meets the Congo River.
- _____ 5. **Niger River**—On its way to the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean, this river flows in a great loop for about 2,600 miles (4,160 km). Before it reaches the sea, it spreads out to form the largest delta in Africa.
- _____ 6. **Nile River**—This is the longest river in the world. It flows northward for more than 4,100 miles (6,560 km) through countries in northeast Africa. After spreading out to form a huge delta it flows into the Mediterranean Sea.
- _____ 7. **Orange River**—For most of its journey towards the Atlantic Ocean, this river flows through the country of South Africa. Its source, however, is in the country of Lesotho.
- _____ 8. **Senegal River**—This river rises in the country of Guinea in west Africa. It flows mostly northwest through Mali and between Mauritania and Senegal.
- _____ 9. **Ubangi River**—As it flows towards the Congo River, this river forms the boundary between the Central African Republic and Zaire and Congo and Zaire.
- _____ 10. **Zambezi River**—This river's westward journey is about 1,600 miles (2,560 km) long. Along its length is beautiful Victoria Falls. It empties into the Mozambique Channel in the Indian Ocean.



Answer Key: 1.D, 2.F, 3.H, 4.G, 5.B, 6.C, 7.J, 8.A, 9.E, 10.I

#7650 © Teacher Created Resources—May be reproduced for non-commercial, educational use only.

