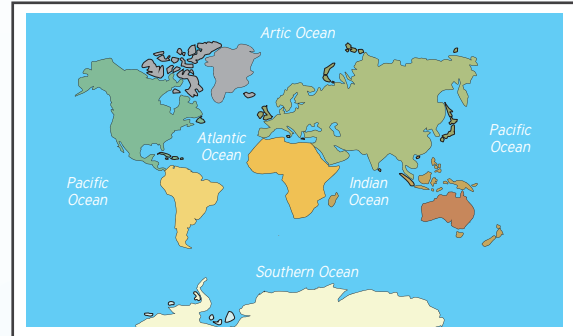


The terms 'ocean' and 'sea' are often used interchangeably to describe the vast salty water that covers around seventy percent of the Earth's surface, surrounding and separating land.

## One Big Ocean?

'The World Ocean' or the 'Global Ocean' is the interconnected system of the Earth's salty ocean waters. The World Ocean is split geographically by the continents, into five ocean basins called; the Arctic Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Southern (or Antarctic) Ocean.



## Just how deep can oceans be?

The Pacific Ocean is the largest and deepest of the oceans; it covers around thirty percent of the Earth's surface and has a maximum recorded depth of 10,994 metres at a point named *The Challenger Deep*.

The Arctic Ocean is the smallest ocean; it covers just three percent of the Earth's surface and has a maximum depth of 5,450 metres.

## Ocean, Sea or something else?

Smaller ocean regions are called **seas, gulfs and bays**. They are usually surrounded by land and are located where land and ocean meet.

You may have heard of:

*The Mediterranean Sea* – surrounded by Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

*The Gulf of Mexico* – connected to the Atlantic Ocean and surrounded by the Gulf coast of the US, Mexico and Cuba.

*The Bay of Bengal* – located in the north-western part of the Indian Ocean, it is the largest water region called a 'bay' in the world.

### Are there are mountains underwater?

Yes there are! In fact, the longest mountain range in the world is underwater, it spans 40,389 miles around the globe and is called the **mid-ocean ridge**.

### Which waters surround the UK?

Four bodies of water border the United Kingdom, these are: the English Channel, the North Sea, the Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

