

# Geographical features



From a geographical point of view, the UK can be divided into 7 areas: Scotland in the North, then the North of England, the Midlands, East Anglia, the South, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Scotland** is a region of mountains and hills with the Highlands in the North, the Grampians, with Ben Nevis (1,343 m), the highest British peak, and the Southern Uplands along the border with England.

In the **North of England** there are the Pennines, a chain of low mountains running down in the middle, with the river Tyne flowing east and the river Mersey flowing west. In the west, in the Lake District, there are the Cumbrian Mountains.

The **Midlands** is the central area of England, with low and mostly flat land, crossed by important rivers like the Trent, the Avon and the Severn, which starts in Wales and is the longest in Britain (354 Km).

The East of England, called **East Anglia**, is an area of very rich land, especially in "the fens" where the fields are often covered with water. Most of this area was once covered by the sea and consisted of marshland until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when it was completely drained.

The **South of England** is a hilly region with the Cornwall and Devon Hills in the Southwest and the Cotswolds in the North. Along the western coast we can find sandy beaches and colourful cliffs, while the most prosperous area is a valley crossed by the river Thames in the Southeast.

**Wales** borders England to the East, and is crossed from North to South by the Cambrian Mountains with Mount Snowdon (1,085 m), which is the highest peak of the region.

**Northern Ireland** has beautiful coasts and beaches and the largest lake of the UK, Lough Neagh.



When looking at geographical features, it is useful to divide the country using five imaginary vertical lines from East to West.

The first area is called the **Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain** and runs from North to South along the Atlantic coast from New York to the Mexican border. The inner edge of the plain is also called Fall Line because of the waterfalls created by the rivers which fall from a higher to a lower level.

The second area is the **Appalachian Highlands**, a low mountain chain which separates the coast from the Great Lakes and the Mississippi Basin. The Mississippi is the longest river and flows for about 3,900 Km from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. It has many tributaries, like the Missouri and the Ohio.

The next region is the **Great Plains**, west of the Mississippi river and the most important agricultural area.

West of the Great Plains there are the **Cordilleran Highlands**, which include the Rocky Mountains, Sierra Nevada and the Cascade Range, with the country's highest peaks. The Rocky Mountains are known as the Continental Divide because all rivers east of the Rockies flow into the Atlantic, while all rivers west of them flow into the Pacific. Between the mountain ranges there is an area of arid desert which includes the Gran Canyon, carved over a million years ago by the rivers Columbia and Colorado.

The last area is the **Pacific Slope**, which includes the fertile valleys of California, Oregon and Washington.





**1** Read the text on the previous page, look at a map on the Net and find the information needed to complete this fact file on the UK.

Useful sites:

▶ [Find your Great Britain](#) *posted by Visit Britain*

<https://www.visitengland.com/>

▶ [Visit England](#) *posted by The official tourist board for England*

<https://www.visitbritain.com/gb/en>

Mountain chains:
Highest mountain:
Rivers:
Longest river:
Major lakes:
Find out some information about:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Lake District</li> <li>■ Loch Ness</li> <li>■ the Cotswolds</li> <li>■ Land's End</li> <li>■ The Fens</li> <li>■ Blackpool</li> <li>■ The Orkneys</li> <li>■ The Giant's Causeway</li> <li>■ Tintagel</li> </ul>



*Lake District*



**2** Read the text on the previous page, look at a map on the Net and find the information needed to complete this fact file on the USA.

Useful sites:

▶ [Visit the USA](#) *posted by Brand USA*

<http://www.visittheusa.com/>

▶ [Visit USA](#) *posted by Visit USA-UK Association*

<http://www.visitusa.org.uk/>

Mountain chains:
Highest mountain:
Rivers:
Longest river:
Major lakes:
Find out some information about the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Alaska</li> <li>■ Hawaii</li> <li>■ Death Valley</li> <li>■ Grand Canyon</li> <li>■ Yellowstone</li> <li>■ Yosemite</li> <li>■ Mount Rushmore</li> <li>■ Niagara Falls</li> </ul>



*Mount Rushmore*