

World map

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A **world map** is a map of most or all of the surface of the Earth. World maps form a distinctive category of maps due to the problem of projection. Maps by necessity distort the presentation of the earth's surface. These distortions reach extremes in a world map. The many ways of projecting the earth reflect diverse technical and aesthetic goals for world maps.^[3]

World maps are also distinct for the global knowledge required to construct them. A meaningful map of the world could not be constructed before the European Renaissance because less than half of the earth's coastlines, let alone its interior regions, were known to any culture. New knowledge of the earth's surface has been accumulating ever since and continues to this day.

Maps of the world generally focus either on political features or on physical features. Political maps emphasize territorial boundaries and human settlement. Physical maps show geographic features such as mountains, soil type or land use. Geological maps show not only the surface, but characteristics of the underlying rock, fault lines, and subsurface structures. Choropleth maps use color hue and intensity to contrast differences between regions, such as demographic or economic statistics.

Contents

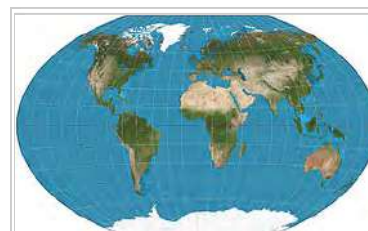
- 1 Map projections
- 2 Thematic maps
- 3 Historical maps
- 4 See also
- 5 References
- 6 Further reading
- 7 External links

Map projections

A map is made using a map projection, which is any method of representing a globe on a plane. All projections distort distances and directions, and each projection distributes those distortions differently. Perhaps the most well known projection is the Mercator Projection, originally designed as a nautical chart.



The world Ortelius' *Typus Orbis Terrarum*, first published 1564.^[1]



A world map on the Winkel tripel projection, a low-error map projection^[2] adopted by the National Geographic Society for reference maps.



Mercator projection (82° S and 82°N.)



Mollweide projection



B. J. S. Cahill Butterfly Map, 1909, from 1919 pamphlet



Polar azimuthal equidistant projection



A south-up map



Pacific-centric map (more commonly used in East Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand)



Gall-Peters projection, an equal area map projection



Robinson projection, used by National Geographic Society

Thematic maps

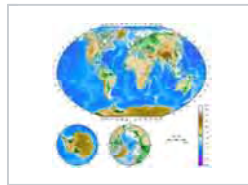
A thematic map shows geographic information about one or a few focused subjects. These maps "can portray physical, social, political, cultural, economic, sociological, agricultural, or any other aspects of a city, state, region, nation, or continent".^[4]



Clickable world map (with climate classification)



A simple political map of the world as of Jan 2015



Topographical map of the world



map of anthropogenic CO₂ emission by country



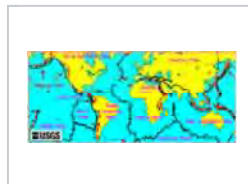
UN Human Development Index by country as of 2008



World map showing life expectancy



Population density (people per km²) by country, 2015



Volcano map



world map showing the continents as of 200 million years ago (Triassic period)



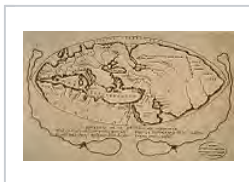
Satellite image of Earth at night

Historical maps

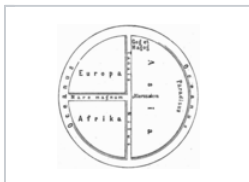
Early world maps cover depictions of the world from the Iron Age to the Age of Discovery and the emergence of modern geography during the early modern period. Old maps provide much information about what was known in times past, as well as the philosophy and cultural basis of the map, which were often much different from modern cartography. Maps are one means by which scientists distribute their ideas and pass them on to future generations.^[5]



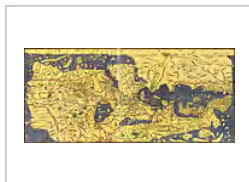
Hypothetical reconstruction of the world map of Anaximander (610–546 BC)



World map according to Posidonius (150–130 BC), drawn in 1628.



Ideal reconstruction of medieval T-and-O maps (from *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, 1895) (Asia shown on the right)



Tabula Rogeriana world map by Muhammad al-Idrisi in 1154. Note that north is to the bottom



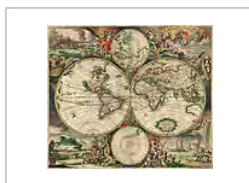
World map in Octant projection (1514). From Leonardo da Vinci's Windsor papers.



World map by Gerardus Mercator (1569), first map in the well known Mercator projection.



1652 world map by Claes Janszoon Visscher



A historical map of the world by Gerard van Schagen, 1689

See also

- Blank maps of the world for historical use
- Wikipedia's clickable world map
- Global Map
- Globe
- International Map of the World
- List of map projections
- List of world map changes
- Mappa mundi
- Time zone
- Rhumblineline network

References

- the map represents state-of-the art knowledge of the time, actively collected from Portuguese sources by the makers of the Dieppe maps during the 1540s to 1560s. The presentation of *Terra Australis* is conventional, imagined as attaching to the Strait of Magellan. A possible sighting of Australia prior to 1560 has been discussed in scholarship but is mostly considered unlikely. The interior of Africa was at the time largely unexplored and is filled in with partially fictional geography.
- Large-Scale Distortions in Map Projections* (http://www.physics.drexel.edu/~goldberg/projections/goldberg_gott.pdf), 2007, David M. Goldberg & J. Richard Gott III, 2007, V42 N4.
- American Cartographic Association's Committee on Map Projections (1988). *Choosing a World Map*. Falls Church: American Congress on Surveying and Mapping. pp. 1–2.
- Thematic Maps (<http://www.lib.washington.edu/maps/MapResources/thematic2.html>) Map Collection & Cartographic Information Services Unit. University Library, University of Washington. Accessed 27 Dec 2009.
- "History of maps and cartography". *emporia.edu*.

Further reading

- Edson, Evelyn (2011). *The World Map, 1300–1492: The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=dK->

TTLbCw78C&printsec=frontcover&dq=world+map&hl=en&sa=X&ei=fmeSUdvNBdTUyQGtqIG4AQ&ved=0CEAQ6AEw/JHU Press. ISBN 1421404303


- Harvey, P. D. A. (2006). *The Hereford world map: medieval world maps and their context* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=bxuAAAAAMAAJ>). British Library. ISBN 0712347607


External links

- World maps from the CIA World Factbook ([world-factbook/docs/refmaps.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/refmaps.html))

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	Wikibooks has more on the topic of: World map
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