

Topic Page: [Lakes](#)

Definition: **lake** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Inland body of water, generally large and too deep to have rooted vegetation completely covering the surface.



Image from: [Lakes cover about one percent of the earth's... in Encyclopedia of Environment and Society](#)

Summary Article: **lake**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Body of still water lying in depressed ground without direct communication with the sea. Lakes are common in formerly glaciated regions, along the courses of slow rivers, and in low land near the sea. The main classifications are by origin: **glacial lakes**, formed by glacial scouring; **barrier lakes**, formed by landslides and glacial moraines; **crater lakes**, found in volcanoes; and **tectonic lakes**, occurring in natural fissures.

Crater lakes form in the calderas of extinct volcanoes, for example Crater Lake, Oregon, USA. Subsidence of the roofs of limestone caves in karst landscape exposes the subterranean stream network and provides a cavity in which a lake can develop. Tectonic lakes form during tectonic movement, as when a rift valley is formed. Lake Tanganyika was created in conjunction with the East African Great Rift Valley. Glaciers produce several distinct types of lake, such as the lochs of Scotland and the Great Lakes of North America.

Lakes are mainly freshwater, but salt and bitter lakes are found in areas of low annual rainfall and little surface run-off, so that the rate of evaporation exceeds the rate of inflow, allowing mineral salts to accumulate. The Dead Sea has a salinity of about 250 parts per 1,000 and the Great Salt Lake, Utah, about 220 parts per 1,000. Salinity can also be caused by volcanic gases or fluids, for example Lake Natron, Tanzania.

In the 20th century large artificial lakes have been created in connection with hydroelectric and other works. Some lakes have become polluted as a result of human activity. Sometimes eutrophication (a state of overnourishment) occurs, when agricultural fertilizers leaching into lakes cause an explosion of aquatic life, which then depletes the lake's oxygen supply until it is no longer able to support life.

images

crater lake, Iceland

Indian Lake

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Lake. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/lake>



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