



## **GEOGRAPHY GLOSSARY**

### **Abrasion**

The wearing away of soil, rock and other materials. The force of the sea grinds against the seabed, beaches and cliffs.

### **Atmosphere**

The atmosphere covers the Earth. It is a thin layer of mixed gases which make up the air we breathe.

### **Attrition**

Hard objects get worn away by constantly knocking into each other – like shingle on a beach that eventually becomes sand.

### **Bars**

Where a spit extends across the sea to block off the land (or sometimes river) behind it.

### **Beach**

Area of sand or shingle between high and low water marks.

### **Biosphere**

The biosphere is that part of Earth's atmosphere, land, and oceans that supports any living plant, animal, or organism.

### **Climate**

The average or normal state of Earth's surface conditions over many years.

### **Coastal arch**

The sea erodes the rock to form first a cave, and finally an arch.

### **Collection**

When rain falls, it will either soak into the earth and become part of the 'ground water' that plants and animals use to drink, or it may run over the soil and collect in the seas, lakes or rivers.

### **Condensation**

When water vapour in the air gets cold and changes back into liquid, forming clouds.

### **Cryosphere**

Areas of ice and snow.

### **Deposition**

Area where eroded material (sand, soil, small pebbles) is deposited.



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### **Dunes**

As the tide ebbs the sand dries out. When onshore winds blow from the sea the sand will move up the beach.

### **Evaporation**

When the sun heats up water in rivers, lakes and seas and turns it into vapour.

### **Greenhouse gases**

Gases in the atmosphere (water vapour, carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, and methane) trap energy from the sun and warm our atmosphere – just like a greenhouse.

### **Groynes**

Wooden or concrete fencing to slow the drift of sand across a beach.

### **High tide**

The sea comes up high on the beach. Tides are caused by the gravity of the sun and moon.

### **Hydrosphere**

The oceans, lakes and seas.

### **Lithosphere**

The land and rocks.

### **Low tide**

The sea is at its lowest point, leaving large areas of beach exposed. Tides are caused by the gravity of the sun and moon.

### **Precipitation**

Rain (or hail, sleet, snow).

### **Salt marshes**

Where there is shelter in river estuaries or behind spits, silt and mud are deposited by the rising and falling tide. Seawater trapped behind leaves the ground marshy (and salty!).

### **Sea cave**

Sea caves are formed by the power of the sea attacking areas of weakness in coastal cliffs.

### **Sea erosion**

The gradual removal of rock material from beaches and sea cliffs.

### **Sea stacks**

Sea stacks were once arches; wave erosion and weathering has caused the arch to fall down, producing a series of small craggy islands.



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### **Shingle beaches**

Shingles are small, rounded pebbles. Eventually the effects of erosion, attrition and abrasion will grind the pebbles into sand.

### **Shoreline**

Where the sea meets the land.

### **Spit**

A spit is a long narrow strip of sand with one end joined to mainland and the other projecting out to sea or across an estuary.

### **Wave**

Moving water

### **Weather**

The actual state of the Earth's surface at a given time.