

Earth's features

Name:

The Earth looks round like a ball, but is not exactly round, it is **oblate**. This simply means that it has a slight bulge towards the equator caused by the rotation of the Earth. It is the third planet from the Sun and is the largest of the terrestrial planets. The Earth's name comes from the Anglo-Saxon word 'Eadwe' which means 'ground or soil' and is the only known planet to support life.

Look at the size of the Earth compared to the moon. Colour in the visible features of the Earth.



Earth



Moon



Sun

The Earth is made of many different layers. The outermost layer is called the crust. It is made up of rocks, soil and seabed. The rocky crust is made up of silicon, aluminium, calcium, sodium and potassium. The crust is divided into continental plates which drift a few centimetres each year.

Beyond the crust is the mantle which makes up 85% of the total weight of the Earth's mass. The mantle is made up of hard rock, molten rock and solid rock. The upper mantle is rigid and is part of the lithosphere. The outer core is beneath the Earth's surface and is made up of super-heated molten lava. This lava contains iron and nickel and the outer core creates the Earth's magnetic field. The inner core is very hot (hotter than the surface of the Sun) and scientists believe that it is made up of iron and other minerals.

Most of the surface of the Earth is covered with water (oceans and seas). Water covers about 70% of Earth's surface, hence the name 'Blue Planet'. Only 3% of