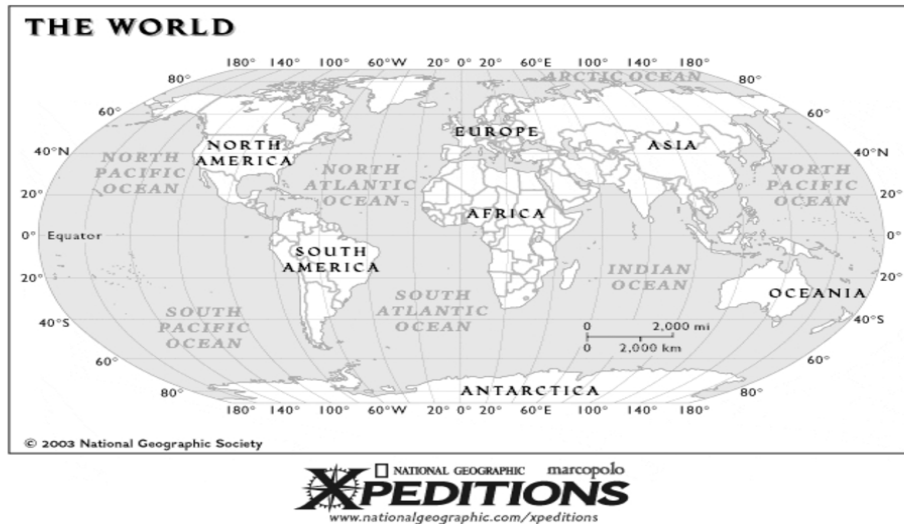


Mapping Weather



Latitude is distance north or south of the Equator, and longitude is distance east or west of the prime meridian. Both are measured in terms of the 360 degrees (symbolized by °) of a circle. Imaginary lines of latitude and longitude intersect each other, forming a grid that covers the Earth and helps us locate points on it.

The Equator is the line of 0° latitude, the starting point for measuring latitude. The latitude of the North Pole is 90° N, and that of the South Pole is 90° S. The latitude of every point in between must be some degree north or south, from 0° to 90°. One degree of latitude covers about 69 miles (111 kilometers).

Each line of latitude forms an imaginary circle around the Earth. Because these circles are parallel to the Equator, they are called parallels of latitude. The farther the circles are from the Equator, the smaller they are; at the Poles they are simply points.

Lines of longitude, which meet at the Poles, are known as meridians. The one that runs through Greenwich, England, is internationally accepted as the line of 0° longitude, or the prime meridian.