

Module 12: Oceanography

Topic 2 Content: The Parts of a Wave Notes

Introduction

The Parts of a Wave

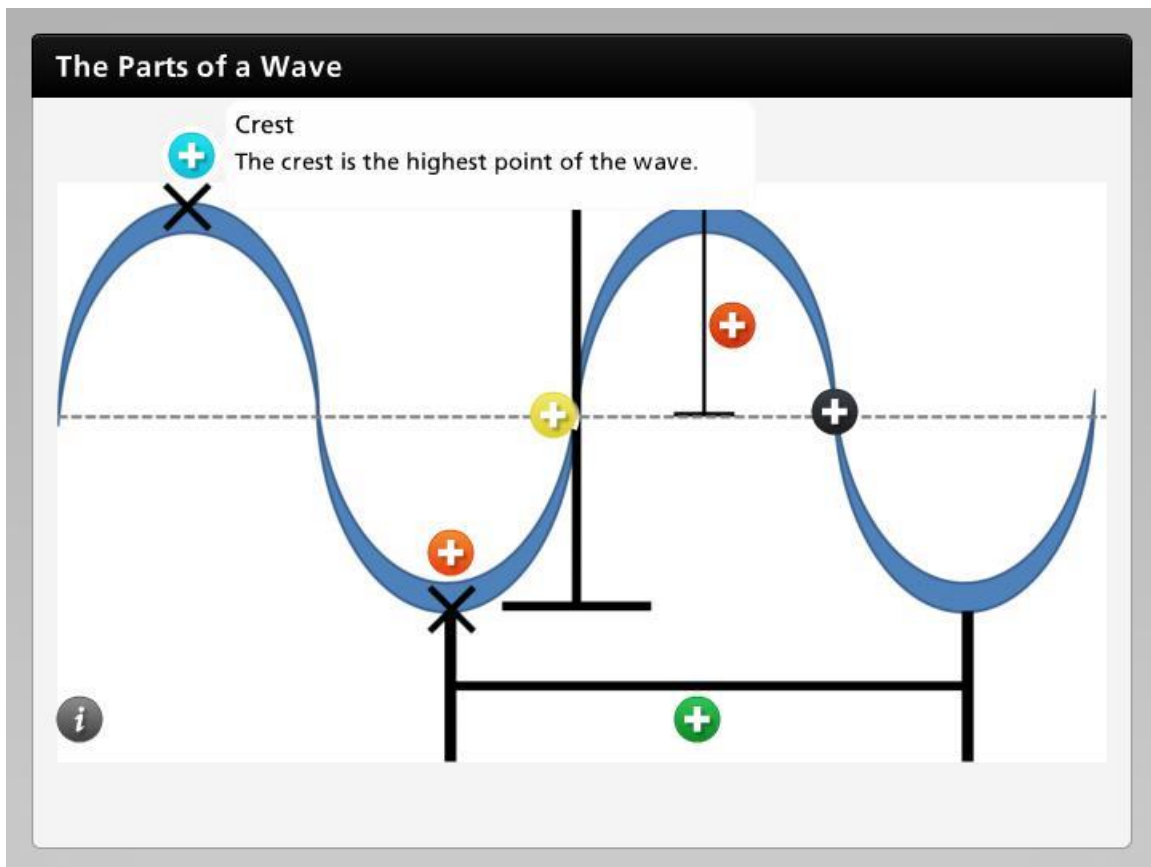
Introduction
A wave is the rhythmic rising and falling of ocean water due to wind or some other disturbing force. This illustration shows the anatomy of an ocean wave. No matter their size, all waves share similar characteristics. In this interactivity, click on each of the icons to learn more about the parts of a wave.

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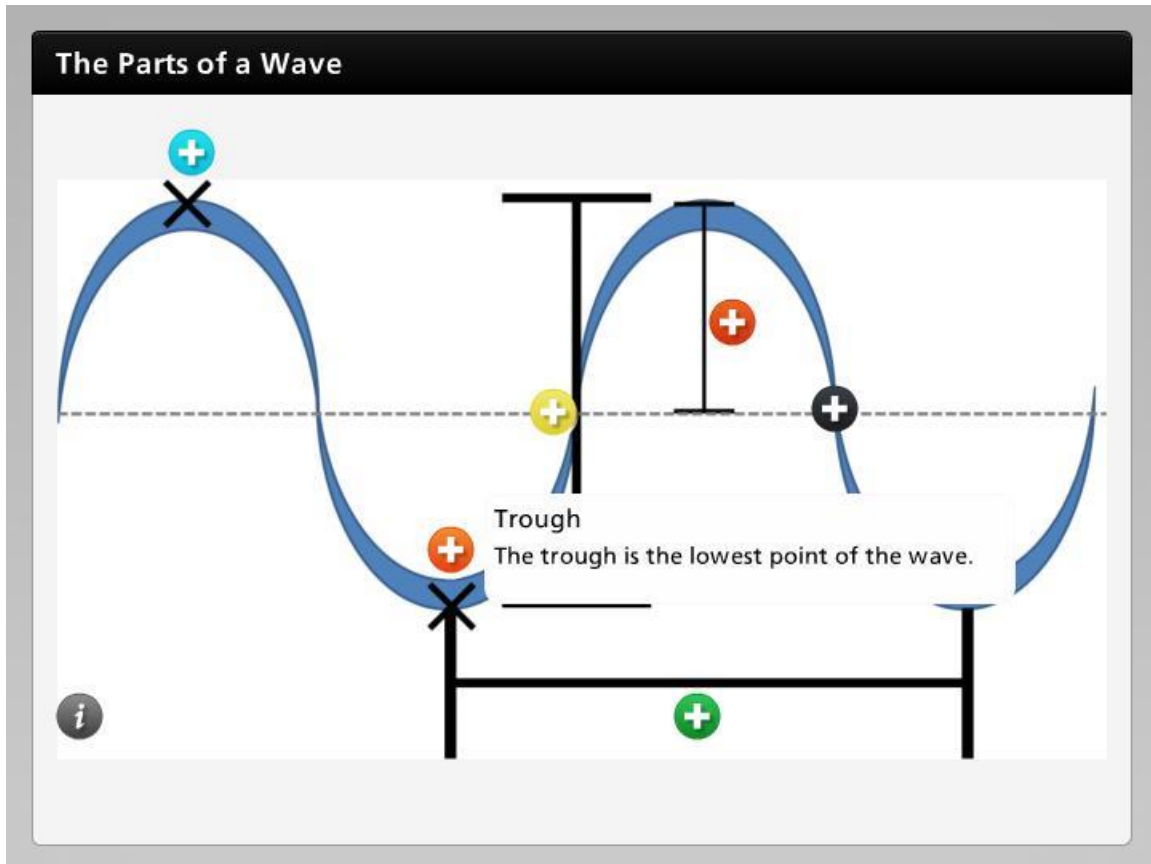
Crest



The crest is the highest point of the wave.

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Trough

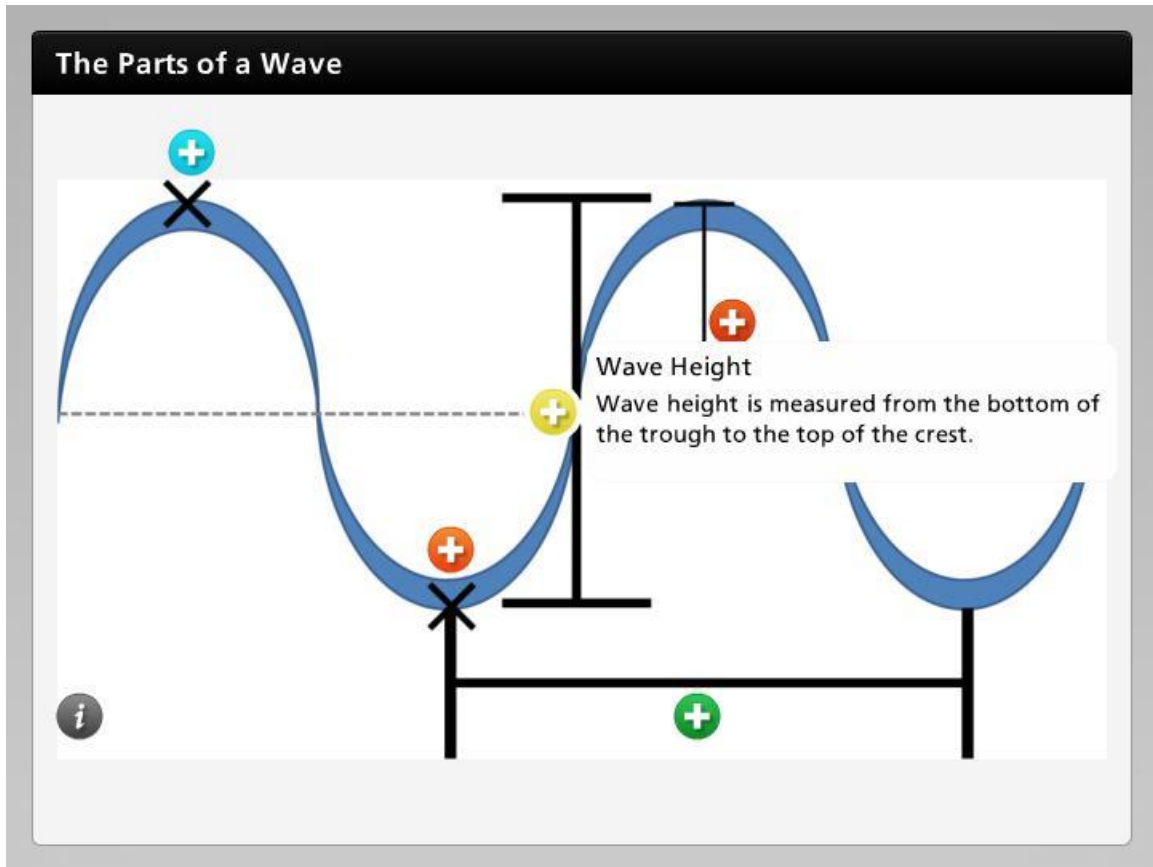


The trough is the lowest point of the wave.

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Wave Height

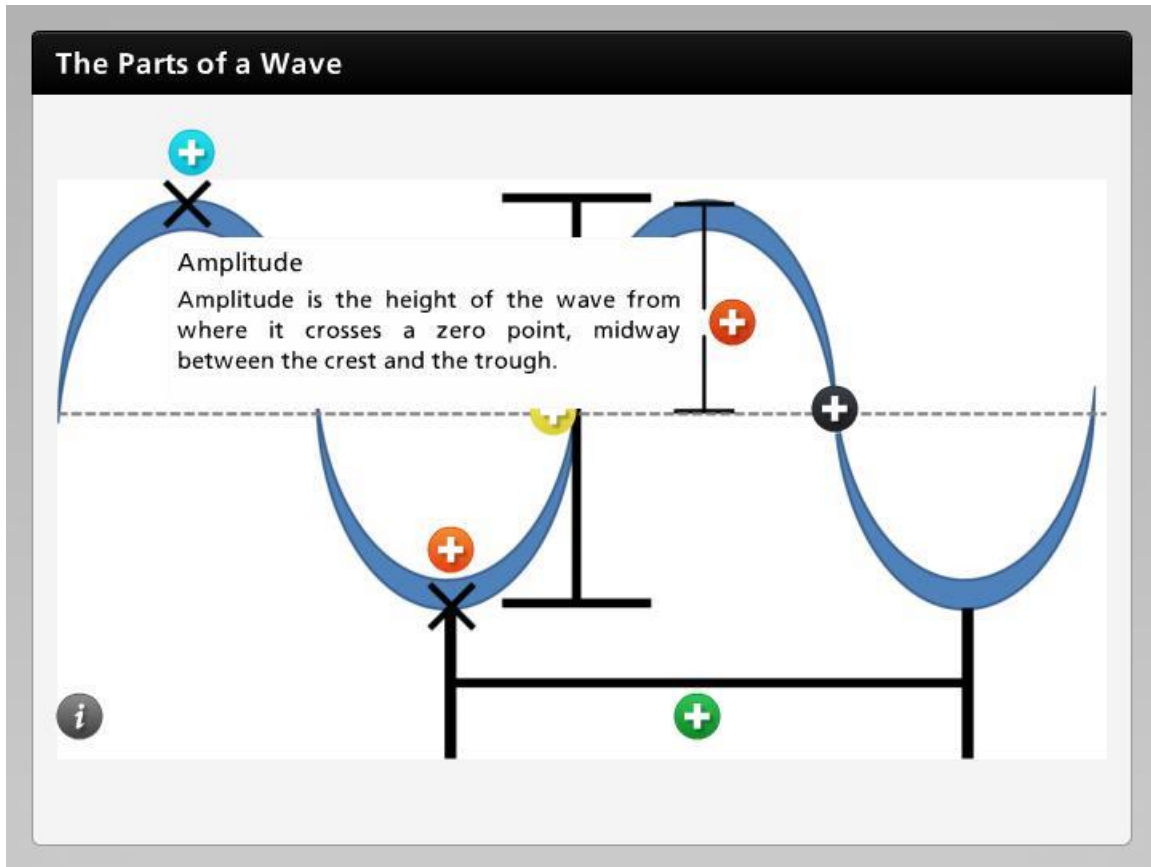


Wave height is measured from the bottom of the trough to the top of the crest.

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Amplitude

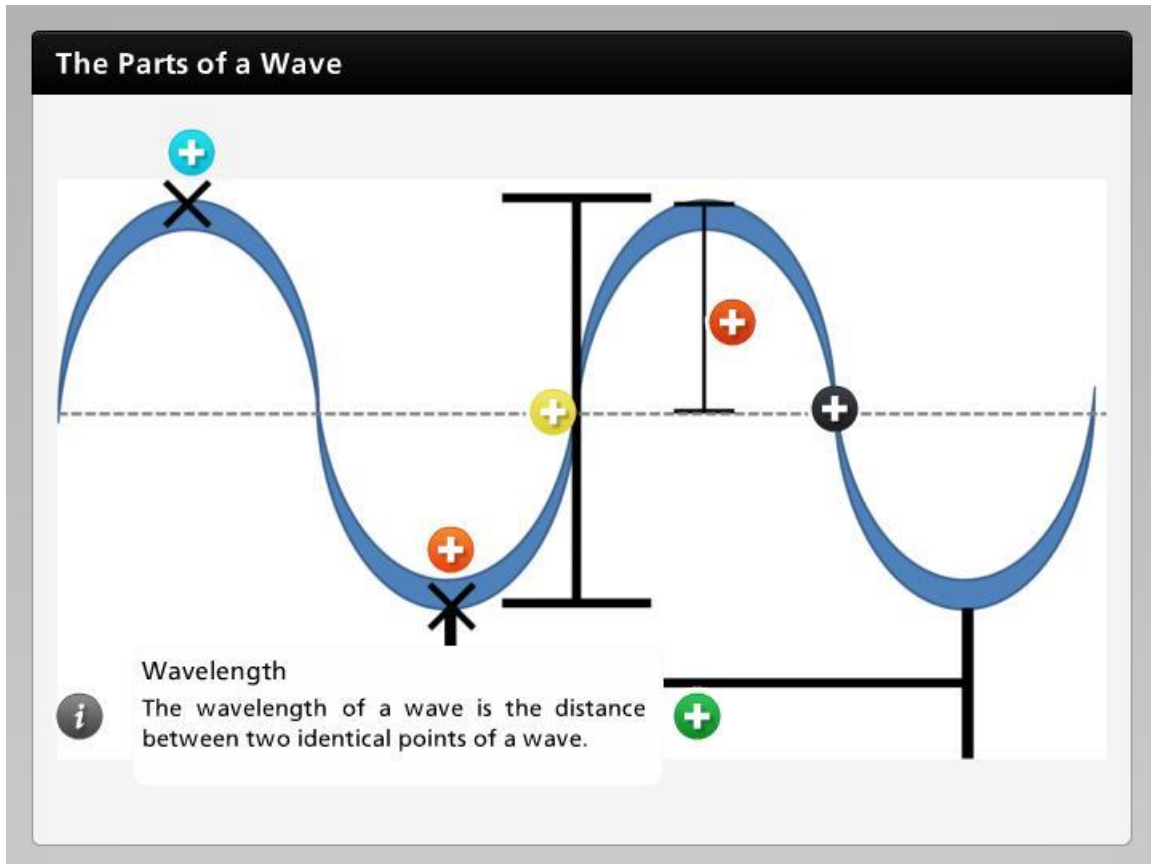


Amplitude is the height of the wave from where it crosses a zero point, midway between the crest and the trough.

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Wavelength

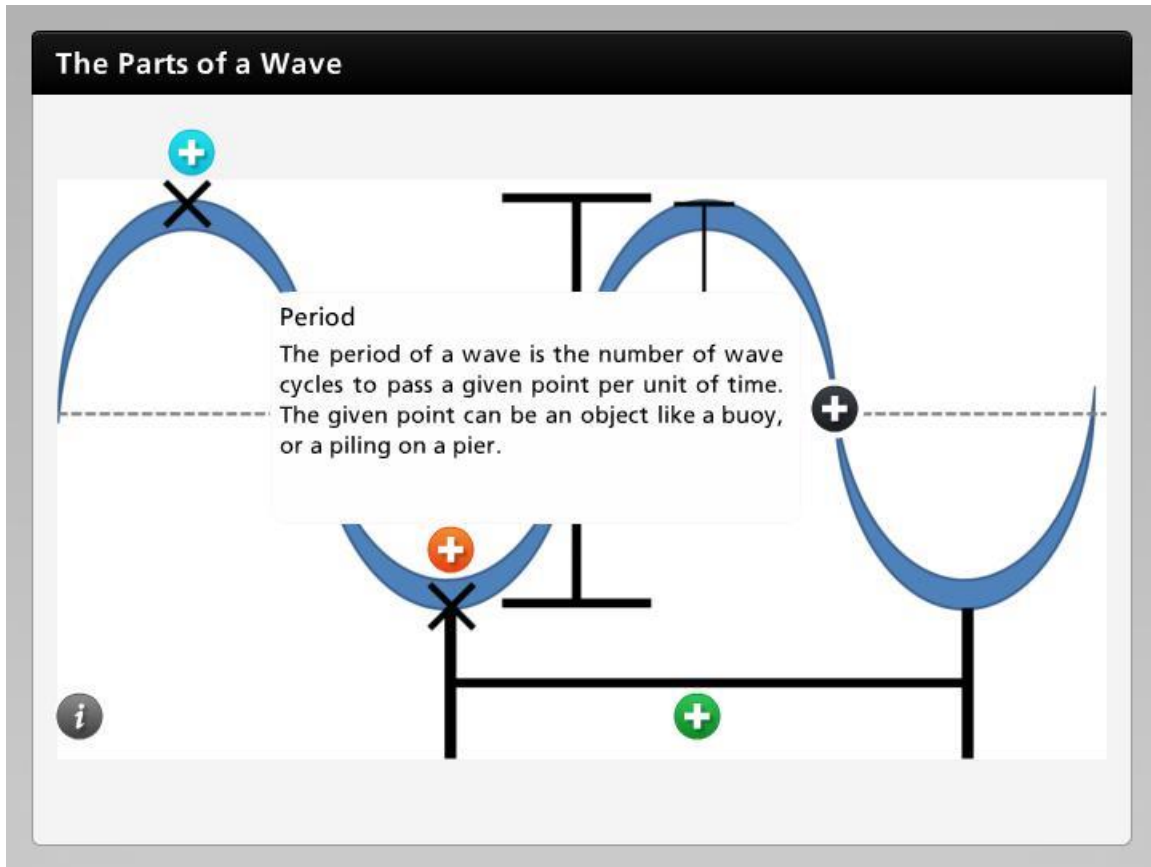


The wavelength of a wave is the distance between two identical points of a wave.

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Period



The period of a wave is the number of wave cycles to pass a given point per unit of time. The given point can be an object like a buoy, or a piling on a pier.