

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia



Click next to begin.

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

Southeast Asia



Southeast Asia is situated between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. The region can be divided into two sub-regions: Mainland Southeast Asia and Maritime Southeast Asia. Mainland Southeast Asia is a large peninsula that juts out from the Asian continent. This sub-region is sometimes called Indochina. It is bordered by the Bay of Bengal in the west and the South China Sea in the east.

Maritime Southeast Asia is a series of archipelagos located off the coast of the mainland. It includes approximately 25,000 islands. The Strait of Malacca is a narrow waterway that connects the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. It is located between the island of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. The Strait of Malacca is one of the most important shipping routes in the world.

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

East Asia

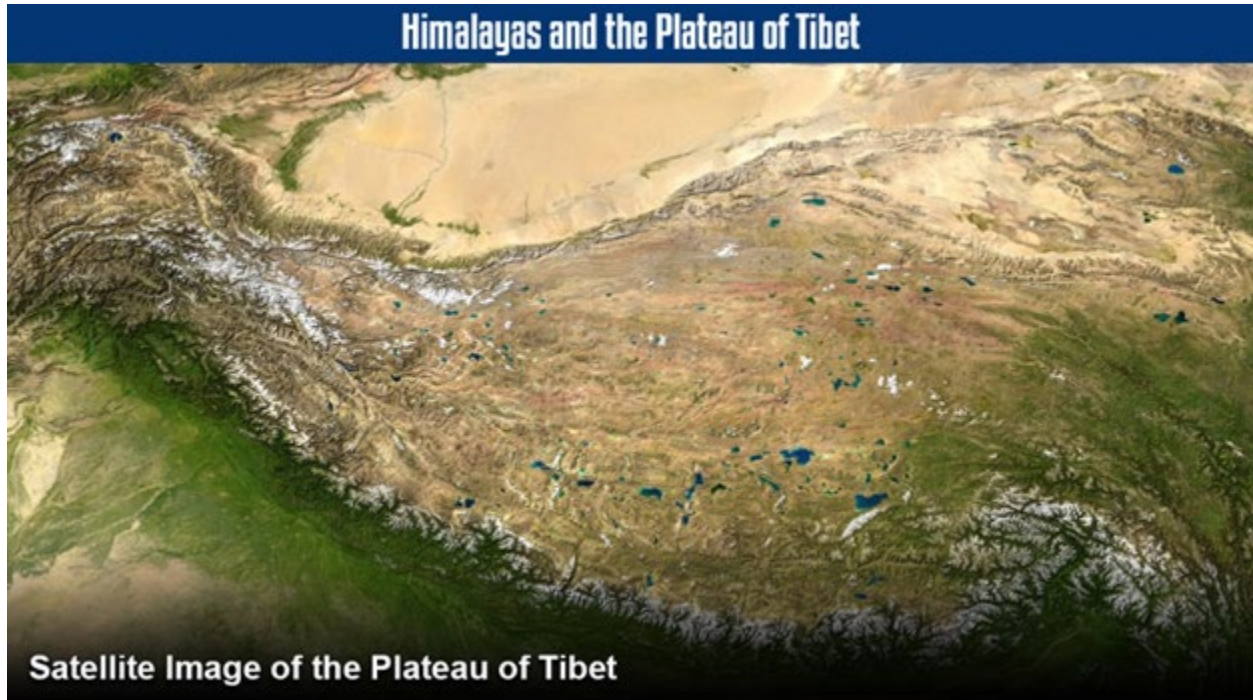


East Asia is located along the coast of the Pacific Ocean. This region extends west from the coast toward the interior of the continent and includes China, Mongolia, and the Korean Peninsula. East Asia also includes several islands, but not as many as Southeast Asia. The Japanese Archipelago and the Island of Taiwan are part of East Asia.

East Asia is framed by several bodies of water. The Pacific Ocean is located to the east. The Sea of Japan lies between the Japanese Archipelago and the Korean Peninsula. The Sea of Japan is also known as the East Sea. The Yellow Sea separates the Korean Peninsula from mainland China. The East China Sea is located off the eastern coast of China. The South China Sea is located off the southern coast of China.

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

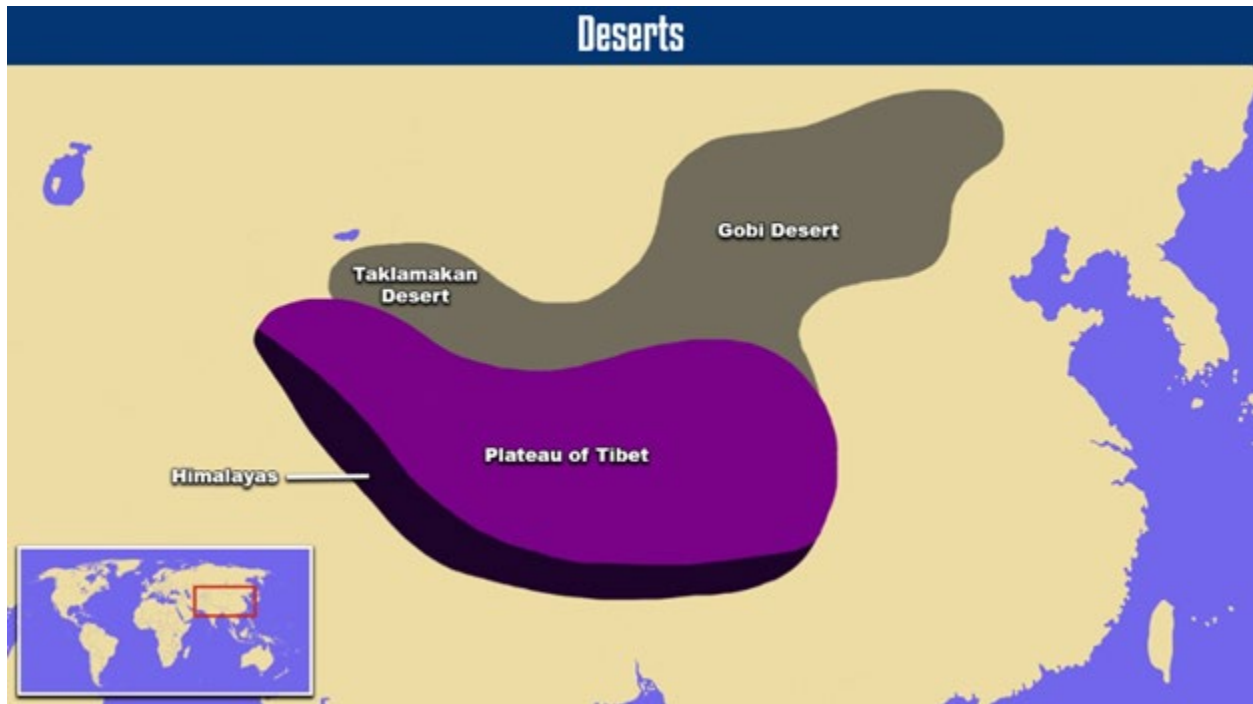
Himalayas and the Plateau of Tibet



The Himalayan Mountains separate South Asia from the rest of the continent. These massive mountains extend into the northern part of Southeast Asia and the western part of East Asia. The Himalayas border a vast elevated plateau called the Plateau of Tibet. The Plateau of Tibet, also called the Tibetan Plateau, is located north of the Himalayas. It is the highest plateau in the world. It rises to an elevation of 16,000 feet and is sometimes called the “roof of the world.”

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

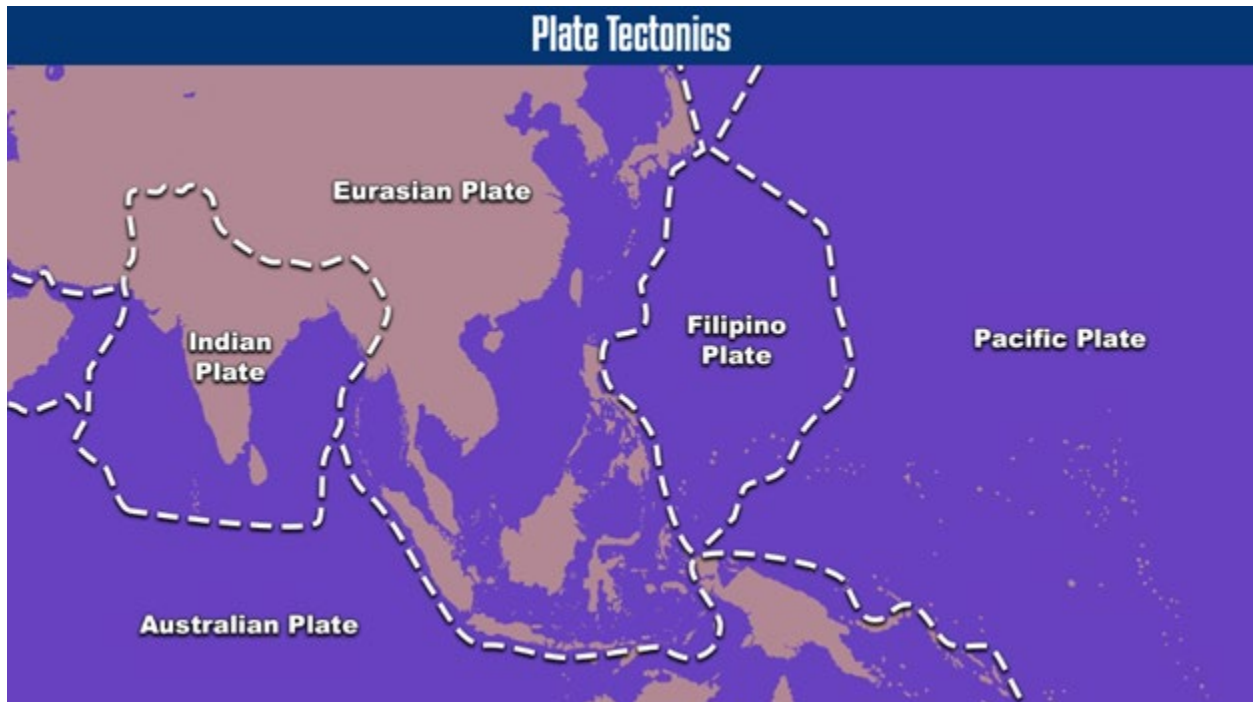
Deserts



The Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau create a large rain shadow to the north. This prevents rain from reaching parts of China, Mongolia, and Central Asia. Arid and semiarid climates are common in these areas. The Taklamakan Desert and the Gobi Desert are located north of the Tibetan Plateau. The Taklamakan is a sandy desert located in northwestern China. The Gobi is a rocky desert located in northern China and southern Mongolia.

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

Plate Tectonics



There are multiple tectonic plate boundaries located in Southeast and East Asia. The Indian plate, Eurasian plate, Pacific plate, Filipino plate, and the Australian plate all converge in this region. Tectonic plates move slowly, building up pressure over time. When the pressure is released, it can cause earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis. Many of the islands in this region were formed by underwater volcanoes. Some of these volcanoes are still active. Mount Fuji is a large volcano located in Japan. It is Japan's tallest peak and is topped with snow for most of the year. Mount Fuji has not erupted since 1707.

Module: Southeast and East Asia
Topic Content: Physical Features of Southeast Asia and East Asia

Major Rivers



There are several major rivers located in Southeast and East Asia. The Mekong River is the most important river in Southeast Asia. It begins in southern China, flows through Mainland Southeast Asia, and empties into the South China Sea. The mouth of the Mekong River forms a fertile delta called the Mekong Delta.

The Yangtze River is located in East Asia. It flows through China, from the Plateau of Tibet to the East China Sea. The Yangtze is the longest river in Asia and the third longest river in the world. In China, the Yangtze is known as the Chang Jiang, which translates to "The Long River."

The Huang He is another major river in China. Huang He translates to the Yellow River in English. The Yellow River is located north of the Yangtze. This winding river empties into the Yellow Sea. The Yellow River gets its name from a yellowish-gray sediment called loess. Loess is a type of fertile soil that is dusty and loose. It is deposited into the Yellow River by wind and water. This changes the color of the river and adds fertile sediment as well.