Coastline

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, or UK, is a union of four countries. These are England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The UK is surrounded by four seas and oceans. These are the Atlantic Ocean, English Channel, Irish Sea and North Sea.



Coastal features

There are many features of the UK coastline.

Physical features

Physical features are naturally formed. Humans haven't made them. Rain, wind and the sea can change physical features over time.



Human features

Human features are those that have been made by humans. There are many human features on the coastline such as shops, roads and piers.



Erosion

Erosion is a natural process where materials, such as rock, sand and soil, are moved from one place to another. As waves crash against the coastline, they break off, or erode, tiny pieces of rock. Over time the coastline is worn away.

Sea defences, such as sea walls and lines of large rocks, called rip-rap, are put at the bottom of cliffs to stop erosion.

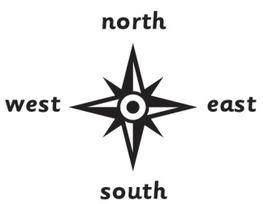


Maps

Maps are used to help people find their way from one place to another or find out where different places are. Physical and human features are marked on a map with symbols.



People will often use a compass to tell them which direction they are travelling. The main points on a compass are north, south, east and west.



Dangers at the coast

The coastline can be a dangerous place. It is important to stay safe and know what to do in an emergency.



Look for warning signs, follow advice and do not take risks.



Never go near water alone. Make sure an adult is with you.



Do not use inflatable toys or airbeds in the sea when a wind sock is blowing.



Red and yellow flags mean it is safe to swim.



Black and white flags mean it is safe for surfing, not for swimming.



Red flags mean danger. It is not safe to swim.



Check the weather forecast for bad weather.



Use safety equipment, such as a life jacket.



Call 999 in an emergency. Ask for the coastguard and they will call for the lifeboat.

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RNLI

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, or RNLI, is a charity that saves lives at sea. There are 238 RNLI lifeboat stations around the UK coastline. Each station has boats and special equipment that the crew use to help people in trouble in the water. Over 8000 people are helped by RNLI volunteers every year.



Image from: Shutterstock editorial/Peter Abel

Whitby

Whitby is a busy tourist town on the coast of North Yorkshire, England. It is surrounded by the beautiful countryside of the North Yorkshire Moors. The River Esk runs through Whitby, splitting the town into two parts. The old town is on the east bank of the river and is full of small shops and narrow, cobbled streets. The new town is on the west bank of the river. The new town has bigger, more modern shops and a large park and museum.



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Captain Cook timeline



Captain James Cook was a famous explorer who lived almost 300 years ago. He travelled to places that no other European had ever visited. He drew detailed maps and was the first person to sail around the world in both directions. He was awarded the Copley Medal for finding out how to keep sailors healthy at sea.

1728	Captain Cook was born in north-east England.
1755	He joined the Royal Navy and became a skilled sailor.
1768	He set off on his first voyage and discovered New Zealand.
1771	He returned to England.
1772	His second voyage began. He sailed close to Antarctica.
1775	Captain Cook returned to England.
1776	His third voyage began. He went to Hawaii.
1779	He was killed by islanders in Hawaii after an argument about a missing boat.

Problems at sea

Boats and ships can sometimes have problems at sea. Rocks, waves and weather can cause boats and ships to become damaged or capsize. A badly damaged ship may be left in the sea to sink or stuck on land. These are called shipwrecks.



Glossary

capsize	When a boat or ship turns over in the water.
charity	A group that raises money for people or animals in need.
coastline	The place where the land meets the sea or ocean.
compass	An instrument used for showing the direction.
emergency	A situation that is serious and dangerous and needs urgent help.
explorer	A person who travels to places to learn about them.
feature	Something that is part of an area of land.
volunteer	A person who works without being paid.

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