

Name _____

Date _____



Latitude & Longitude

Today we're going to talk about latitude and longitude...in just a minute.

Originally conceived by the ancient Greek geographer Ptolemy, latitude and longitude are the axes of a grid that appears on maps and globes.

Latitude is the horizontal axis, lines that run east and west across a map. The Equator is the central latitude line on Earth, dividing the planet into Northern and Southern Hemispheres. It marks 0 degrees latitude. Every other latitude measurement gives a location that is a certain number of degrees north or south of the Equator.

Longitude is the vertical axis of the grid. These lines run north and south, and taper toward each other at the North and South Poles. The Prime Meridian is the central line of longitude, marking 0 degrees. Greenwich, England, sits on this imaginary line. Longitude measures how far east or west a place is from the Prime Meridian.

Together, latitude and longitude create coordinates, which provide the absolute location of any spot on Earth. When writing coordinates, the degree of latitude north or south comes first, followed by a comma and the degree of longitude east or west.

When might you find coordinates of latitude and longitude useful?