

# CBSE Notes Class 9 Social Science

## Geography Chapter 2 - Physical Features of India

India has all major physical features of the earth, i.e., mountains, plains, deserts, plateaus and islands. The land of India displays great physical variation. Geologically, the Peninsular Plateau constitutes one of the ancient land masses on the earth's surface. The Himalayas and the Northern Plains are the most recent landforms. The northern plains are formed of alluvial Deposits. The [CBSE Notes Class 9 Social Science](#) Geography Chapter 2 on Physical Features of India will provide you with more insight into these topics. You can also use these for revision during the exam. These notes are concise and provide you a brief description of the entire chapter.

### CBSE Notes Class 9 Social Science Geography Chapter 2 - Physical Features of India

#### Major Physiographic Divisions

The physical features of India are grouped under the following physiographic divisions:

1. The Himalayan Mountains
2. The Northern Plains
3. The Peninsular Plateau
4. The Indian Desert
5. The Coastal Plains
6. The Islands

Let's discuss each of them in detail:

#### The Himalayan Mountains

Himalayan mountains are stretched over the northern borders of India. These mountain ranges run in a west-east direction from the Indus to the Brahmaputra. The Himalaya consists of 3 parallel ranges in its longitudinal extent.

1. The northern-most range is known as the **Great or Inner Himalayas or the Himadri**. It is the most continuous range consisting of the loftiest peaks with an average height of 6,000 metres.
2. The folds of the Great Himalayas are asymmetrical in nature. The core of this part of Himalayas is composed of granite.

3. The range lying to the south of the Himadri forms the most rugged mountain system and is known as **Himachal or lesser Himalaya**.
4. Pir Panjal range forms the longest and the most important range.
5. The outermost range of the Himalayas is called the **Shiwaliks**. These ranges are composed of unconsolidated sediments.
6. The longitudinal valley lying between lesser Himalaya and the Shiwaliks are known as **Duns**. DehraDun, Kotli Dun and Patli Dun are some of the well-known Duns.

The Himalayas have also been divided on the basis of regions from west to east.

1. The part of Himalayas lying between Indus and Satluj has been traditionally known as Punjab Himalaya but it is also known regionally as Kashmir and Himachal Himalaya from west to east respectively.
2. The part of the Himalayas lying between Satluj and Kali rivers is known as **Kumaon Himalayas**.
3. The Kali and Teesta rivers divide the Nepal Himalayas and the part lying between Teesta and Dihang rivers is known as **Assam Himalayas**.
4. The Brahmaputra marks the eastern-most boundary of the Himalayas.
5. Beyond the Dihang gorge, the Himalayas bend sharply to the south and spread along the eastern boundary of India, which is known as the **Purvachal or the Eastern hills and mountains**. The Purvachal comprises the Patkai hills, the Naga hills, the Manipur hills and the Mizo hills.

## The Northern Plain

The northern plain has been formed by the interplay of the 3 major river systems - the Indus, the Ganga and the Brahmaputra along with their tributaries. It spreads over an area of 7 lakh sq. km.

The Northern Plain is broadly divided into 3 sections as mentioned below:

1. The Western part of the Northern Plain is referred to as the **Punjab Plains**. This plain is formed by the Indus and its tributaries - the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas and the Satluj.
2. The **Ganga plain** extends between Ghaggar and Teesta rivers. It is spread over the states of North India, Haryana, Delhi, U.P., Bihar, partly Jharkhand and West Bengal.

3. **Brahmaputra plain** lies in the state of Assam.

According to the variations in elevation points, the Northern plains can be divided into 4 regions.

1. The rivers, after descending from the mountains, deposit pebbles in a narrow belt of about 8 to 16 km in width lying parallel to the slopes of the Shiwaliks, which is known as **bhabar**. All the streams disappear in this bhabar belt.
2. The streams and rivers re-emerge and create a wet, swampy and marshy region known as **terai**.
3. The largest part of the northern plain is formed of older alluvium. It lies above the floodplains of the rivers and presents a terracelike feature which is known as **bhangar**.
4. The soil in the bhangar region contains calcareous deposits and is known as **kankar**. The newer, younger deposits of the floodplains are called **khadar**.

## The Peninsular Plateau

The Peninsular plateau is a tableland composed of the old crystalline, igneous and metamorphic rocks. It was formed due to the breaking and drifting of the Gondwana land. One of the distinct features of the Peninsular plateau is the black soil area known as **Deccan Trap**.

This plateau consists of 2 divisions:

1. **The Central Highlands:** The part of the Peninsular plateau lying to the north of the Narmada river, covering a major area of the Malwa plateau, is known as the Central Highlands. The eastward extensions of this plateau are locally known as the *Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand*.
2. **The Deccan Plateau:** It is a triangular landmass that lies to the south of the river Narmada. An extension of the Plateau is also visible in the northeast which is known as the Meghalaya, Karbi-Anglong Plateau and North Cachar Hills.

The Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats mark the western and the eastern edges of the Deccan Plateau respectively.

Western Ghats	Eastern Ghats
Western Ghats lie parallel to the western coast.	The Eastern Ghats stretch from the Mahanadi Valley to the Nigiris in the South.
They are continuous and can be crossed	They are discontinuous and irregular. They can

through passes only.	be dissected by rivers draining into the Bay of Bengal.
They are higher than the Eastern Ghats. Their average elevation is 900–1600 metres.	Their average elevation is 600 metres.
Anamudi is the highest peak in the Eastern Ghats.	Mahendragiri (1,501 metres) is the highest peak in the Eastern Ghats.

## The Indian Desert

The Indian desert lies towards the western margins of the Aravali Hills.

- It is a sandy plain covered with sand dunes.
- This region receives very low rainfall below 150 mm per year.
- It has a dry climate with low vegetation cover.

## The Coastal Plains

A coastal plain is a flat, low-lying piece of land next to the ocean. To the east and west of the peninsular plateau, 2 narrow strips of plain lands are found, which are respectively called Eastern Coastal Plain and Western Coastal Plain.

### Eastern Coastal Plain

The Eastern Coastal Plains is a wide stretch of the landmass lying between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal. In the northern part, it is referred to as the **Northern Circar**, while the southern part is known as the **Coromandel Coast**. Large rivers, such as the Mahanadi the Godavari, the Krishna and the Kaveri have formed extensive delta on this coast. Lake Chilika is an important feature along the eastern coast

### Western Coastal Plain

The western coast is sandwiched between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea. It is a narrow plain and consists of 3 sections as mentioned below:

- The northern part of the coast is called the **Konkan** (Mumbai – Goa)
- The central stretch is called the **Kannad Plain**
- The southern stretch is referred to as the **Malabar coast**

## The Islands

An island is a piece of sub-continental land that is surrounded by water. Lakshadweep Islands group is composed of small coral islands which were earlier known as Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindive.

The entire group of islands is divided into 2 broad categories:

1. The Andaman in the north
2. The Nicobar in the south

These islands lie close to the equator and experience equatorial climate and have thick forest cover.

The diverse physical features of India have immense future possibilities of development because of the following reasons.

- The mountains are the major sources of water and forest wealth.
- The northern plains are the granaries of the country. They provide the base for early civilisations.
- The plateau is a storehouse of minerals, which has played a crucial role in the industrialisation of India.
- The coastal region and island groups provide sites for fishing and port activities.

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