

Year 10 Geography Vocabulary List

(Tier 2 and Tier 3)



Abrasion – the sandpaper effect of glacial ice scouring a valley floor and sides

Arch – a wave eroded passage through a small headland

Arete – a sharp, knife-like ridge formed between two corries cutting back by processes of erosion and freeze thaw

Attrition - rocks being carried by the waves smash together and break into smaller, smoother and rounder particles

Bar - where a spit grows across a bay

Beach nourishment – adding new material to a beach artificially, through the dumping of large amounts of sand and shingle

Beach re-profiling – changing the profile or shape of the beach

Biomass – renewable organic materials

Brownfield site – land has been used, abandoned and now awaits reuse

Bulldozing – the pushing of deposited sediment by the snout of the glacier as it advances

Cave – a large hole in a cliff

Coastal realignment – change in the position of the coastline resulting from management practices

Corrie – armchair-shaped hollow in the mountainside formed by glacial erosion

Decomposer – organisms such as bacteria or fungi that break down plant and animal material

Deforestation – the cutting down and removal of forest

Deposition – occurs when material being transported by the sea is dropped due to the sea losing energy

Dereliction – abandoned buildings and wasteland

Desertification – the process by which land becomes drier and degraded

Drumlin – egg-shaped hill of moraine material

Ecosystem – a community of plants and animals that interact with each other and their physical environment

Erratics – rocks transported and dumped by glacial ice to a different location

Famine – widespread, serious, often fatal shortage of food

Food chain – connections between different organisms that rely upon one another as their source of food

Food web – a complex hierarchy of plants and animals relying on each other for food

Formal economy – the type of employment where people work to receive a regular wage, pay tax and have certain rights

Gabion – steel wire mesh filled with boulders used in coastal defences

Glacial trough – wide, steep sided valley eroded by a glacier

Greenfield site – a plot of land, often in a rural or on the edge of an urban area that has not been built on before

Groyne – a wooden barrier built out into the sea to stop the longshore drift

Hanging valley – a tributary glacial trough on the side of a main valley often with a waterfall

Hard engineering – using concrete or artificial structures to defend against natural processes

Hydraulic power – process where breaking waves compress pockets of air in cracks in a cliff

Longshore drift – transport of sediment along a stretch of coastline caused by waves approaching the beach at an angle

Mass movement – downhill movement of weathered material under the force of gravity

Megacity – an urban area with a total population of more than ten million people

Migration – when people move from one area to another

Moraine – frost-shattered rock debris and material eroded from the valley floor and sides

Nutrient cycling – on-going recycling of nutrients between living organisms and their environment

Overgrazing – feeding too many livestock for too long on the land, so it is unable to recover its vegetation

Plucking – a process of erosion- rocks are pulled from the valley floor as water freezes them to a glacier

Producer – an organisms or plant that is able to absorb energy from the sun through photosynthesis

Pyramidal peak – where several corries cut back to meet at a central point, the mountain takes the form of a steep pyramid

Ribbon lake – a long narrow lake in the bottom of a glacial trough

Rock armour – large boulders dumped on a beach as part of coastal defences

Rotational slip – slippage of ice along a curved surface

Sand dunes – coastal sand hill above the high tide mark, shaped by wind action

Selective logging – sustainable forestry management where only carefully selected trees are cut down

Soft engineering – managing erosion by working with natural processes to help restore beaches and coastal ecosystems or to reduce the risk of river flooding

Spit – depositional landform formed when a finger of sediment extends from the shore out to the sea, often at a river mouth

Squatter settlement – an area of poor quality housing, lacking in services like water supply, sewerage and electricity

Stack – isolated pillar of rock left when the top of an arch has collapsed

Subsistence farming – a type of agriculture producing only enough food and materials for the benefit of a farmer and their family

Truncated spur – a former valley spur which has been sliced off by a valley glacier, forming steep edges

Urban greening – process of increasing and preserving open space in urban areas i.e. public parks and gardens

Urbanisation – when an increasing % of a country's population comes to live in town and cities

Urban regeneration – reversing the urban decline by modernising or redeveloping, aiming to improve the local economy

Urban sprawl – unplanned growth of urban areas into the surrounding rural areas

Wave cut platform – rocky, level shelf at or around sea level representing the base of old, retreated cliffs